A Century of Ballads

1810-1910

By Harold Simpson

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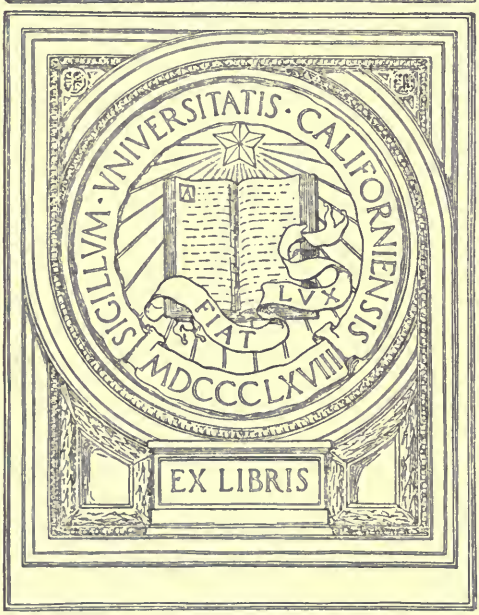

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A CENTURY OF BALLADS
1810–1910

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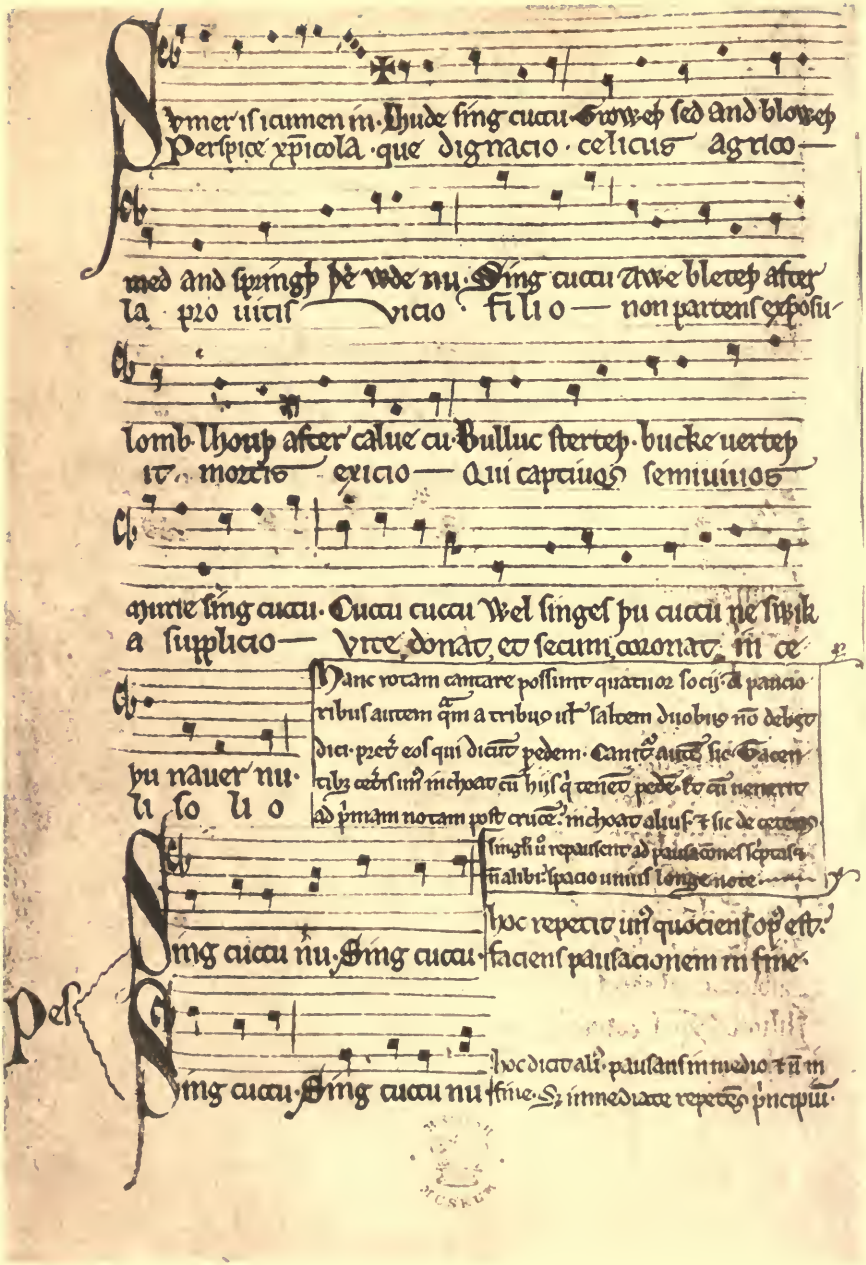
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A CENTURY OF BALLADS

1810-1910

THEIR COMPOSERS AND SINGERS, WITH SOME INTRODUCTORY CHAPTERS ON "OLD BALLADS AND BALLAD MAKERS"

BY

HAROLD SIMPSON

"I know a very wise man that believed that if a man were permitted to make all the Ballads, he need not care who should make the laws of a nation"

Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun

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PREFACE

THIS is a story of popular song—nothing more. It does not aim at being either critical or instructive, but only entertaining.

My grateful thanks are due to all those—composers, singers, authors, publishers — who have so generously responded to my appeals for assistance in my endeavour to effect the object I had in view.

H. S.

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

IN dealing with the earlier and more historical portion of this book, I have consulted, principally, the following works: Grove's *Dictionary of Music*, Chappell's *Old English Popular Music*, Alfred Edward Moffat and Frank Kidson's *The Minstrelsy of England*, Rev. S. Baring-Gould's *English Minstrelsie*, and Edmonstoune Duncan's *The Story of Minstrelsy*.

My acknowledgments are also due to the authors and publishers of the following books: *Antoinette Sterling and Other Celebrities*, M. Sterling Mackinlay, Hutchinson and Co.; *Reminiscences of my Life*, Sir Charles Santley, Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons; *The Life of Sterndale Bennett*, J. R. Sterndale Bennett, Cambridge University Press; *Sir Arthur Sullivan*, Arthur Lawrence, James Bowden.

For permission to use the facsimile of Sir William Sterndale Bennett's "Sing, Maiden,

Sing" my thanks are due to Mr. J. R. Sterndale Bennett and Messrs. Novello and Co.; for that of Gounod's "Salve Regina" to Messrs. Phillips and Page; for the facsimile letters from Gounod, Gladstone and Swinburne to Mr. Fred. E. Weatherly; for the caricature of Hatton to Mr. Charles Lyall and the *Musical Times*, and for the Hatton letter to Mr. D. Hatch.

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PART I

INTRODUCTORY

"OLD BALLADS AND BALLAD-MAKERS"

A CENTURY OF BALLADS
1810–1910

CHAPTER I

THE EVOLUTION OF THE BALLAD

WHAT is a ballad? Nowadays the name is used to describe any type of "popular" song, irrespective of its length, its subject, or its musical treatment. In olden times the word has had various meanings, but the distinction between a ballad and a song has never been very strongly marked. "A song and a ballad," says a writer of an introduction to the *Book of English Songs*, published in 1851, "have points of resemblance and difference. A ballad, which at present seems to signify a song wherein a story is told, originally meant a short or even a long poem, modulated in the recital to serve as a musical accompaniment to a dance, from *ballare*, to dance. A song strictly should express sentiment only, but the distinction has often been disregarded. A ballad is allowed more licence than a song, and can be any length;

a song should be short and terse, and each verse exactly alike in rhythm."

This explanation does not help us much. But it bears witness to one fact, namely, that originally a ballad was not a love song at all, or very seldom. This distinction, which indeed hardly exists to-day, it would be impossible to retain for the purposes of this book, and in dealing with the ballads of the last century or so I shall treat the word as signifying any song of whatever nature or sentiment that is of a popular type.

But in taking a bird's-eye view of the history and gradual evolution of English songs and ballads it will be necessary to refer to the older and distinctive meanings of the word ballad, which had in earlier days a certain significance. The connection of ballads and dance tunes, as signified by the derivation of ballad from the Italian *ballata*, a dance, which is again derived from *ballare*, to dance, has been mentioned by the writer quoted above, and must be taken into consideration as being one of the many uses to which the word "ballad" has been put at various stages of its history. Morley in his *Plaine and easie introduction to Practicall Musicke*, published in 1597, says: "There is another kind—more light than this [the Vilanelle] which they tearm Ballete or daunces, and are songs

which being sung to a dittie may likewise be danced, these and other light kinds of musicke are by a general name called aires." "Such were the songs," remarks Mr. W. H. Cummings in *Grove*, "to which Bonny Boots, a well-known singer and dancer of Elizabeth's Court, both 'tooted it' and 'footed it.'" A further reference is found in Butler's *The Principles of Musicke*, published in 1636, in which the author speaks of "the infinite number of Ballads set to sundry pleasant and delightful tunes by amusing and witty composers, with country dances fitted unto them."

It seems an established fact that the words of many old songs were written to popular dance tunes, and that the custom was in country villages to dance and sing them at the same time. Dancing in those days was a more stately and deliberate affair than it is in modern times, so that the feat is not so difficult a one as it might appear. The tunes of a number of these old Country Dances have been preserved, and in many cases the words also. A collection of them was published in 1686, under the title of *The Dancing Master*, from which I take the following description of "Joan Sanderson or The Cushion Dance," a very popular ballad dance with the country lads and lasses of the period.

"This dance is begun by a single person (either man or woman), who taking a cushion in hand, dances about the room, and at the end of the tune stops and sings, 'This dance it will no further go.' The musician answers, 'I pray you, good sir, why say you so?' *Man:* 'Because Joan Sanderson will not come too.' *Musician:* 'She must come too, and she shall come too, and she must come whether she will or no.' Then the man lays down the cushion before the woman, on which she kneels, and he kisses her, singing, 'Welcome, Joan Sanderson, welcome, welcome.' Then she rises, takes up the cushion, and both dance, singing, 'Prinkum-prankum is a fine dance, and shall we go dance it once again, once again, and once again, and shall we go dance it once again?' Then, making a stop, the *woman* sings as before, 'This dance it will no further go.' *Musician:* 'I pray you, madam, why say you so?' *Woman:* 'Because *John* Sanderson will not come too.' *Musician:* 'He must come too, and he shall come too, and he must come whether he will or no.' And so she lays down the cushion before a man, who, kneeling upon it, salutes her, she singing, 'Welcome, John Sanderson, welcome, welcome.' Then he taking up the cushion, they take hands, and dance round singing as before. And thus they do till the whole company are taken into the

ring; and if there is company enough, make a little ring in its middle, and within that ring set a chair, and lay the cushion in it, and the first man set in it. Then the cushion is laid before the first man, the woman singing, 'This dance it will no further go'; and as before, only instead of 'Come too' they sing 'Go fro'; and instead of 'Welcome, John Sanderson,' they sing 'Farewell, John Sanderson, farewell, farewell,' and so they go out, one by one, as they came in. Note.—The women are kissed by all the men in the ring at their coming and going out, and likewise the men by all the women."

It will be noticed that there is a good deal of indiscriminate kissing connected with the performance of this dance; and this seems to have been a feature of many of these old ballad dances, which may possibly have something to do with their popularity.

But it is more than probable, in spite of its derivation, that this meaning of the word ballad was a later interpolation. The old English ballads were for the most part long pieces of narrative verse, generally followed by an envoi or moral, such as the famous "Chevy Chase" and the "Battle of Otterburn." The first purveyors of ballads in England were the Bards, who held an important place in popular estimation before the Norman Conquest. These ballads

were transmitted orally from father to son for centuries. With the advent of Christianity the authority of the Bards, who were formerly treated as sacred persons, soon dwindled, and gradually they came to be known as Gleemen or Harpers.

With the Norman Conquest came the French Troubadours, or Minstrels, who also sang to the harp, and the old name of Gleemen was presently forgotten. Minstrelsy flourished greatly in the reign of Richard I (1189), and the old story of that monarch's release from captivity by his favourite minstrel Blondel is too well known to repeat here.

Music, in fact, seems to have played a large part in the lives of the people from the earliest times. "Songs and Ballads," says Sir John Hawkins in his *History of Music*, "with easy tunes adapted to them, must at all times have been the entertainment, not only of the common people, but of the better sort; and these must have been of various kinds, satirical, humorous, moral, and amorous." Every trade and every form of amusement or sport had its song; love, war, the dangers of the sea, the delights of country life, all and each were represented in song. At first they were handed down by tradition; but later, when the art of printing became known, the popular ballads of the day were hawked up and down the country by itinerant

pedlars, who frequently sang them first and sold them afterwards.

The earliest known example of an old English popular song or ballad which has come down to us is the now famous Rota, or endless canon, "Sumer is icumen in." This dates in all probability from about the year 1240, and contains the earliest known example of canon, and of persistently repeated bass. Its antiquity, if nothing else, makes it sufficiently interesting for me to quote the words here.

Original words.

Sumer is icumen in,
Lhude sing Cuccu,
Groweth sed, and bloweth med,
And springth the wde nu,
Sing Cuccu.

Awe bleteth after lomb,
Lhouth after calve cu ;
Bulluc sterteth, bucke verteth,[1]
Murie sing Cuccu,
Cuccu, cuccu.
Wel singers thu Cuccu
Ne swik thu naver nu.

Words modernized.

Summer is come in,
Loud sing, Cuckoo !
Groweth seed and bloweth mead
And spring'th the wood now ;
Sing Cuckoo.

[1] i.e. frequents the green fern.

Ewe bleateth after lamb,
Loweth after calf [the] cow ;
Bullock starteth, buck verteth,
Merry sing, Cuckoo,
Cuckoo, cuckoo !
Well singst thou, Cuckoo,
Nor cease thou never now.

The next ballad which claims our attention is the Song of Agincourt, dating from Henry V's reign. "When the King entered the City of London in triumph after the battle," says Chappell, "the gates and streets were hung with tapestry representing the histories of ancient heroes ; and boys with pleasing voices were placed in artificial turrets, singing verses in his praise. But Henry ordered this part of the pageantry to cease, and commanded that for the future no 'ditties should be made or sung by minstrels or others' in praise of the victory as his : 'for that he would whollie have the praise and thankes altogether given to God.'" The Song of Agincourt appeared soon afterwards, and was a favourite piece with the minstrels of the day. It begins

Deo gracias, Anglia,
Redde pro victoria :

"Return thanks, O England, to God for the victory," thus conforming, in the letter at any rate, to the King's injunctions.

Another ballad which in all probability dates

from this reign, or even a little earlier, is the famous "John Dory," though no version of the tune seems to be known as existing before 1600. Carew, in his *Survey of Cornwall*, published in 1602, says: "The prowess of one Nicholas, son to a widow near Foy, is descanted upon in an old three-man's song, namely, how he fought bravely at sea with one John Dory (a Genowey as I conjecture) set forth by John, the French King, and after much blood shed on both sides, took and slew him." It may be noted in passing that the old songs were always written for three or more voices, and hence came to be known as "three-man's songs," often corrupted into "freeman's songs."

This old ballad of "John Dory" was still well known and popular in Charles II's reign. Dryden refers to it in one of his lampoons as follows:—

> But Sunderland, Godolphin, Lory,
> These will appear such chits in story,
> 'Twill turn all politics to jests,
> To be repeated like John Dory
> When fiddlers sing at feasts.

Before his death Henry V granted an annuity of a hundred shillings to each of his minstrels, and the grant was confirmed in the reign of his son Henry VI.

From the latter's reign probably date "Nowell,

Nowell," and the still more famous "Heave and ho Rumbelow."

Heave and ho rumbelow,
Row the boat, Norman row,
Row to the haven.

Norman was Mayor of London in this reign, and Ritson in his *Ancient Songs and Ballads*, quoting the historian Fabian, gives the following account of the song, the authorship of which is credited to the Thames watermen :—

"John Norman, Mayre of London, upon the morrowe of Symon and Judes daye, the accustomed daye when the new mayre used yearly to ryde with great pompe to Westminster to take his charge, this mayre, first of all mayres, brake that ancient and olde continued custom, and was rowed thyther by water, for the which the watermen made of hym a roundell or song to hys great prayse, the which began," etc. Playford afterwards substituted "Whittington" for "Norman." It is interesting to note that D'Israeli, in his *Curiosities of Literature*, mentions hearing the sailors at Newcastle, when heaving anchors, singing "Heave and ho! rumbelow!"

Skelton, in his poem "Bowge of Court," has a reference to this old ballad.

His throat was clear, and lustily could feign,
And ever he sang, sith I am nothing plain
To keep him from piking it was a great pain :

Hold up the helm, look up, and let God steer!
I would be merry, what wind that ever blow:
Heave and ho! rumbelow, row the boat, Norman, row.

With regard to "Nowell," a Christmas Carol, there appear to have been two versions of the words, sacred and secular, an arrangement which was apparently quite common in those days.

From about this period dates the old ballad of "Chevy Chase," which was above all the ballad of the English people, and was set to many different airs. It was originally sung to the tune of "When Flying Fame," and later to that of "The Two Children in the Wood."

There is little further to record in the way of ballads till we come to the reign of Henry VIII, under whose patronage music flourished abundantly. Henry was passionately devoted to the art, and no mean performer on the lute and virginals, besides being a composer of some distinction. It was during his reign that the word "ballad" (or "ballet," as it was then often written) came into general use as a name for narrative pieces in rhyme set to music, and indeed for songs of all kinds. In this reign, too, the first song-book was printed in England, in 1530, by Wynken de Worde. This book contained nine songs, but gave the bass part only of the songs. Of Henry's own compositions the best remembered is his "Pastime with good company," also

known as "The Kynges Ballad." Another ballad popular in this reign, though apparently not written by the King himself, was "Now Robin lend to me thy bow," while mention must be made of Anne Boleyn's "O death, rocke me on slepe," a song whose title suggests that this unhappy lady had some premonition of her approaching end on the scaffold.

Other ballads of the time were "Hey ding-a-ding" (probably the same as "Old Sir Simon the King"), "Have with you to Florida," "Bonny Lass upon a Green," "By a Bank as I Lay" (a great favourite with Henry VIII, and afterwards reprinted as a Christmas Carol, "Welcome Yule"), "As I went to Walsingham," "Pepper is Black," "Greensleeves" (one of the most famous of the old ballad dances, which is still being printed and sung, though no longer danced), and "Go from my Garden, go." There were, of course, hundreds of topical songs on events of the moment, but those hardly come under the category of ballads, as understood in this book. The best class of ballads confined itself entirely to historical or sentimental subjects.

Towards the end of Henry's reign a reaction against ballads and ballad-singers set in. The persecution began with a proclamation in 1533, when an edict was issued to suppress "fond books, ballads, rhimes, and other lewd treatises

in the English tongue." Four years later a man of the name of John Hogon was arrested for singing in public a political ballad to the tune of "The Hunt is up"; and in 1543 an Act was passed "for the advancement of true religion, and for the abolishment of the contrary," in which it was stated that "froward and malicious minds, intending to subvert the true exposition of Scripture, have taken upon them, by printed ballads, rhymes, etc., subtilly and craftily to instruct his highness' people, and specially the youth of this his realm, untruly. For reformation whereof, his majesty considereth it most requisite to purge his realm of all such books, ballads, rhymes, and songs, as be pestiferous and noisome. Therefore, if any printer shall print, give, or deliver any such, he shall suffer for the first time imprisonment for three months, and forfeit for every copy 10*l.*, and for the second time, forfeit all his goods, and his body be committed to perpetual prison."

However, during the reign of Edward VI ballads began to multiply again, and no new proclamation was passed. But with the accession of Mary there was published a fresh edict against "books, ballads, rhymes, and treatises," which, she complained, had been "set out by printers and stationers, of an evil zeal for lucre, and covetous of vile gain."

When Elizabeth came to the throne this persecution ceased, and the art of balladry began to flourish again. "But," says Chappell, "the educated classes did not again bestow their patronage upon this kind of amusement, and henceforward the ballad became the exclusive property of the lower orders of the people, both song and tune being in future provided for them by persons little if at all removed in social position from themselves."

The number of ballads that were printed during the reign of Elizabeth was something enormous, and the country was overrun with itinerant ballad-singers, idle youths who reaped a golden harvest by "singing and selling ballads in every corner of cities and market-towns, and especially at fairs, markets, and such-like public meetings."

Henry Chettle, in a strange publication entitled *Kind Hart's Dreame*, first published in 1592, has given an account of these ballad singers and sellers, in which he contrasts that time with the simplicity of former days. The ghost of Anthony Now-Now, alias Anthony Munday, an old ballad-writer and itinerant fiddler, is supposed to be speaking, when he says: "When I was liked there was no thought of that idle upstart generation of ballad-singers, neither was there a printer so lewd that would set his finger to a lascivious line. But now ballads are abusively chanted in

every street; and from London this evil has overspread Essex and the adjoining counties. There is many a tradesman of a worshipful trade, yet no stationer, who after a little bringing up apprentices to singing brokery, takes into his shop some fresh men, and trusts his old servants of a two months' standing with a dozen groatsworth of ballads. In which, if they prove thrifty, he makes them pretty chapmen, able to spread more pamphlets by the state forbidden, than all the booksellers in London."

This Anthony Munday, by the way, was a famous ballad-singer of his day, who got his nickname of Anthony Now-Now from the fact that one of his favourite songs was the one beginning

> When shall a man shew himself gentle and kinde?
> When should a man comfort the sorrowful minde?
> O Anthony, now, now, now,
> O Anthony, now, now, now.

Elsewhere in the same pamphlet the author makes special mention of the sons of one Barnes, who "most frequented Bishop's Stortford, the one with a squeaking treble, the other with an ale-blown base, and used to brag that they earned twenty shillings a day."

It appears abundantly evident that ballads, whilst increasing in quantity, had begun to deteriorate considerably in quality. "I loathe to speak of it," says Bishop Hall in *Martin Mar-*

sixtus, published in this same year, 1592, "every red-nosed rhymester is an author, every drunken man's dream is a book; and he, whose talent of little wit is hardly worth a farthing, yet layeth about him so outrageously as if all Helicon had run through his pen: in a word, scarce a cat can look out of a gutter, but out starts a halfpenny chronicler, and presently a proper new ballet of a strange sight is indited."

One of the most famous, but by no means the most decent, of the ballads that were in vogue about this time was the one known as "The Carman's Whistle," which is mentioned by Henry Chettle in his *Kind Hart's Dreame*, when he says: "It would be thought the carman, that was wont to whistle to his beasts a comfortable note, might as well continue his old course, whereby his sound served for a musical harmony in God's ear, as now to follow profane jigging vanity."

It seems that the carmen of this period were particularly noted for their musical abilities and for whistling the tunes of the popular ballads of the day. In a tract written by Taylor, the Water-Poet, entitled "The World runnes on Wheels," he says: "If the carman's horse be melancholy or dull with hard and heavy labour, then will he, like a kind piper, whistle him a fit of mirth to any tune; of which generosity and courtesy your *coachman* is altogether ignorant, for he never

whistles, but all his music is to rap out an oath." And again: "The word *Carmen*, as I find it in the dictionary, doth signify a verse, or a song; and betwixt car*men* and car*man* there is some good correspondence, for versing, singing, and whistling, are all three musical."

Amongst other ballads which appear to have been immensely popular at this time may be mentioned "Watkin's Ale," "Chopping-Knives," and "Frier Fox-Taile."

"The words of these popular ballads," says Chappell, "were written by such men as Elderton, 'with his ale-crammed nose,' and Thomas Deloney, 'the balleting silk-weaver of Norwich.' The former is thus described in a MS. of the time of James I, formerly in the possession of Mr. Payne Collier:—

"'Will Elderton's red nose is famous everywhere,
And many a ballet shows it cost him very dear;
In ale, and toast, and spice, he spent good store of coin,
You need not ask *him* twice to take a cup of wine.
But though his nose was red, his hand was very white,
In work it never sped, nor took in it delight;
No marvel therefore 'tis, that white should be his hand
That ballets writ a score, as you well understand.'

"Nashe, in 'Have with you to Saffron Walden,' says of Deloney, 'He hath rhyme enough for all miracles, but whereas his muse, from the first peeping forth, hath stood at livery at an ale-house wisp, never exceeding a penny a quart, day or

night—and this dear year, together with the silencing of his looms, scarce that—he is constrained to betake himself to carded ale, whence it proceedeth that since Candlemas, or his jig of *John for the King*, not one *merry* ditty will come from him ; nothing but *The Thunderbolt against Swearers*, *Repent*, *England, Repent*, and the *Strange Judgments of God*.' Such, then, were the men who were to replace the ministrels."

Once more, in the thirty-ninth year of Elizabeth's reign, repressive measures were passed, in an Act by which all "minstrels wandering abroad" were held to be "rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars," and were to be punished as such. Again, in 1648, the Provost-Marshal was empowered to seize upon all ballad-singers and to send them to the several militias. But the Act had little effect on the ballad-singers of the day. "They were found in every corner of the big cities, and in every market town throughout the country, singing and selling ballads."

"The England of the Tudors and Stuarts," says a recent writer, "was certainly a musical England ; and Erasmus in 1604 said it had the most handsome women, kept the best tables, and was the most cultivated in music of all the peoples of the world. The Commonwealth gave a check to music, but with the Restoration came

renewed vitality; and the reign of Charles II has been called the Augustan Age of Song."

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there arose a new generation of ballad-writers, men who were the master-musicians of their age, and destined to achieve an imperishable place in the history of English national song.

CHAPTER II

BALLADS OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

THE seventeenth century was fairly rich in song-writers, prominent among whom was Henry Lawes, some of whose songs are still sung to this day. Born at Dinton, in Wiltshire, in 1595, Henry Lawes was a most gifted musician and a thorough Englishman. "In order to ridicule the growing fashionable taste for Italian vocal music—really not understood by its enthusiastic hearers," says Mr. Frank Kidson in his *Minstrelsy of England*, "he set to music the contents table of an Italian song book, and palmed it off as an Italian song!" Among the best known of his songs are "Love's Votary" (a setting of Herrick's "To Anthea"), "The Lark," "Dear, thy face is Heaven to me," "While I listen to thy voice," and his settings of the songs in Milton's *Comus*.

His elder brother William, though perhaps not so well known, was also a clever composer, and was court musician to Charles I. His setting of Herrick's "Gather ye Rosebuds" is still

often sung; and it is interesting to note that the words were still in manuscript when set by him. He was killed at Chester in the Civil War in 1645.

To the beginning of this century belongs Robert Johnson's beautiful air "As I walked forth one summer's day," as also the song by an Italian composer, Ferabosco, resident in England, entitled "Shall I seek to ease my grief?"

One of the favourite airs of the "Madrigal period" was "Since first I saw your face," composed by Thomas Ford. Ford appears to have been a court musician attached to Prince Henry, son of James I, at a yearly stipend of £30, which on the accession of Charles I was increased to £80. "Since first I saw your face" was originally written as a four-part song, as was another of Ford's, which was almost as popular, "There is a ladie sweet and kind."

A contemporary of Ford's was John Dowland, whose fame as a song-writer rests chiefly on one song, "The Frog Galliard." This was also originally written as a part-song, to the words "Now, O now, I needs must part," but Dowland afterwards adapted it for one voice with accompaniment for the lute. "This practice of writing songs for either one or many voices," says *Grove*, "seems to have been common in England, as in Italy." The same authority

states that "The Frog Galliard" is almost the only instance to be found in the Elizabethan period of a popular ballad tune known to be from the hand of a celebrated composer.

From about this period dates Thomas Morley's setting of Shakespeare's "It was a lover and his lass," from *As You Like It*, though Morley perhaps belongs more strictly to the sixteenth century than the seventeenth. There seems to be considerable doubt as to the date of his death, which is placed by some in 1604.

"The Jolly, Jolly Breeze," a fairly well-known song of that day, was composed by John Eccles, who in the early part of the seventeenth century published a collection of nearly a hundred songs, none of which seem to have survived the lapse of time.

One of the oldest, if not actually the oldest, "patriotic" songs of the type which we now associate with that name is "When the King enjoys his own again." It probably dates from the end of Charles I's reign, was sung by the Cavaliers against the Roundheads, and later all over England at the Restoration. "A song that has helped to make history," says Ritson, "it is the most famous and popular air ever heard of in this country. Invented to support the declining interests of Charles I, it served afterwards with more success to keep up the spirits of the Cava-

liers and promote the restoration of his son—an event it was employed to celebrate all over the kingdom. At the Revolution (of 1688) it, of course, became an adherent of the exiled family, whose cause it never deserted. And as a tune is said to have been a principal means of depriving King James of the crown, this very air, upon two memorable occasions, was very near being equally instrumental in replacing it on the head of his son. It is believed to be a fact that nothing fed the enthusiasm of the Jacobites, down almost to the present reign, in every corner of Great Britain, more than 'The King shall enjoy his own again.'"

The earliest known reference to the song is in *The Gossip's Feast, or Morall Tales*, published in 1647, where one gossip is made to say, "By my faith, Martin Parker never got a fairer brat: no, not when he penned that sweet ballad 'When the King enjoys his own again'"; from which it may be gathered that Martin Parker was the author of the words. The tune to which they were sung is a very old one, the origin of it being unknown.

Another song of which Martin Parker was the author was "When the Stormy Winds do Blow," afterwards known as "You Gentlemen of England." The origin of this tune is also unknown.

Another very popular ballad of the day was "To all You Ladies now at Land," the words of which are by the Earl of Dorset, and were written when he was at sea during the first Dutch War, 1664–5. It was popularly supposed that he wrote them on the night before an engagement with the enemy, but, according to Dr. Johnson, "Lord Dorset had been a week employed upon it, and only retouched or finished it on the memorable evening." But even the worthy Doctor seems to have been caught napping on this occasion, as the only engagement with the enemy took place in June, 1665, and the song would appear to be referred to in an entry in Pepys' *Diary* in January, 1665, six months before the engagement took place, where he says: "To my Lord Brouncker's by appointment, in the Piazza, Covent Garden; where I occasioned much mirth with a ballet I brought with me, made from the seamen at sea to the ladies in town."

The words were set as a glee by Dr. Calcott, but were generally sung to an old English melody.

"The Buff Coat has no Fellow" is a song which probably dates from this period, as the buff coat was a distinguishing mark of the soldier of the seventeenth century, but its origin is wrapped in mystery. Another song of a different kind, about whose date and origin also nothing is

known, is the famous "In the Season of the Year," with its familiar chorus :—

Oh, it's my delight
On a shiny night
In the season of the year.

The words were set to a fine old English melody, and the song "has been sung," says Chappell, "by several hundred voices together at the harvest homes of George IV."

One of the most popular songs of a jovial type in the seventeenth century was the ballad entitled "The Delights of the Bottle," composed by Matthew Lock, who flourished from 1632 to 1677. This song is now lost in obscurity, but another of Lock's still lives, namely, "My Lodging is on the Cold Ground," though it is probable that the tune as at present known is a different one to Lock's original setting.

Another immensely popular "drinking" song of the period was Jeremy Savile's "Here's a Health unto His Majesty." Perhaps it is hardly fair to put it under the category of drinking songs, it is really more than that, and was a popular patriotic song in the reign of Charles II. Savile wrote it originally as a three-part song. Beyond his four-part song "The Waits," usually sung at the meetings of the Madrigal Society and similar bodies, little is now remembered of Savile's other compositions.

Royal lyric writers are few and far between, but Charles II is credited with having written the words of a song which was very popular in its day, "I pass all my hours in a shady old grove." The words were set by Pelham Humfrey, who also published a setting of "Where the bee sucks," which was not destined to have a long life. A song of his which attained some popularity was "Wherever I am and whatever I do," composed for Dryden's *Conquest of Granada* in 1672. One of Humfrey's peculiarities as a composer was his predilection for minor keys.

A contemporary of Humfrey's was Dr. John Blow, whose setting of the Earl of Rochester's verses "All my past life is mine alone" was a popular ballad of the day. Dr. Blow was first and foremost a composer of church music, but two other of his songs that achieved popularity were "We all to conquering beauty bow," and "It is not that I love you less," the names of which would seem to suggest that long titles for songs were the fashion of the day. "It is not that I love you less" was also set by Charles Young, father of the singer Cecilia Young, who afterwards married Dr. Arne.

A more lasting fame has been the lot of the popular old song "The Roast Beef of Old England." The music of this song is by Richard

Leveridge, a bass singer who flourished from 1670 to 1758. He had a magnificent bass voice, and, says *Grove*, "his voice remained unimpaired so long that in 1730, when 60 years old, he offered, for a wager of 100 guineas, to sing a bass song with any man in England."

The words of the song are often attributed to Leveridge also, but the first two verses are by Fielding, Leveridge afterwards adding the others. The old tune was very largely employed in the early ballad operas, and in modern times the air is often played at banquets as a signal for dinner. Mr. Kidson tells an anecdote of a vegetarian banquet in the North of England, where "a hitch in the programme occurred, and it was gently hinted to a local singer that he might pleasantly fill in the hiatus with a song. Conscious by his own experience of the failure of vegetarianism, he appropriately and feelingly struck up 'The Roast Beef of Old England'!"

An old commentator, in speaking of this song, says rather quaintly: "Several attempts have been made to raise eating into the dignity which drinking has so long enjoyed of being a theme for song, but all in vain. 'The Roast Beef of Old England' is the only exception among a mass of failures." Leveridge also wrote a setting for "Who is Sylvia?" and is known as the composer of an older version of "Black Ey'd Susan,"

which it is said he arranged from a still older melody.

Undoubtedly the most famous composer of the seventeenth century was Henry Purcell, who has been called the "Father of English Song." It is with his songs only that I have to do here, and of these possibly none has been more enduringly popular than his beautiful little rondo "I attempt from love's sickness to fly," originally composed for Dryden's *Indian Queen*. Of this song Dr. Burney, writing in 1789, says: "It is an elegant little ballad which, though it has been many years dead, would soon be recalled into existence and fashion by the voice of some favourite singer who would think it worth animation." It is doubtful whether this song was ever really dead; certainly to-day it remains with its beauty and freshness as unimpaired as ever.

Of Purcell's settings of the songs in Shakespeare's *Tempest*, the writer in *Grove* says: "Two of the songs, 'Come unto these yellow sands' and 'Full fathom five,' have retained uninterrupted possession of the stage from the time they were composed till this day." Another of Purcell's dramatic compositions, "Come if you dare," the martial song of the Britons in Dryden's *King Arthur*, is still well known to-day.

Turning to the more purely popular side of

Purcell's genius, it is curious to note by way of contrast that he was the composer of the air afterwards associated with the famous "Lilliburlero," the words of which have been ascribed at different times to Lord Wharton and the Earl of Dorset, though it is probable that neither was actually the author.

This song, which had twelve verses, according to the version printed in Percy's *Reliques*, had a good deal to do with the fermenting of the revolution of 1688. It was sung all over the country by army and people alike, and the refrain ran thus :—

Lero, lero, lilli burlero, lero, lero, bullen a la—

twice repeated after each verse. The words are of an extremely feeble nature, and it is difficult to understand the song's immense popularity, unless it were due to the catchiness of the tune. Says a contemporary writer : "A foolish ballad was made at that time, treating the Papists, and chiefly the Irish, in a very ridiculous manner, which had a burden, said to be Irish words, 'Lero, lero, lilliburlero,' that made an impression on the King's army, that cannot be imagined by those that saw it not. The whole army, and at last the people, both in city and country, were singing it perpetually. And, perhaps, never had so slight a thing so great an effect."

Sir John Hawkins in his *History of Music* tells an anecdote of Purcell, in connection with the old song of "Sir John Barleycorn," originally sung to the tune of "Stingo" or "Oil of Barley." This tune was afterwards called "Cold and Raw," and is, with a few alterations, the tune to which Henry Carey's "Sally in our Alley" is now sung.

"This tune," says the historian, "was greatly admired by Queen Mary, the consort of King William, and she once affronted Purcell by requesting to have it sung to her, he being present. The story is as follows: The Queen having a mind one afternoon to be entertained with music, sent to Mr. Gosling, then one of her Chapel, and afterwards sub-dean of St. Paul's, to Henry Purcell, and to Mrs. Arabella Hunt, who had a very fine voice and an admirable hand on the lute, with a request to attend her. They obeyed her commands. Mr. Gosling and Mrs. Hunt sang several compositions of Purcell, who accompanied them on the harpsichord. At length the Queen, beginning to grow tired, asked Mrs. Hunt if she could not sing the ballad of 'Cold and Raw.' Mrs. Hunt answered yes, and sang it to her lute. Purcell was all the while sitting at the harpsichord unemployed, and not a little nettled at the Queen's preference of a vulgar ballad to his music; but seeing Her Majesty

delighted with this tune he determined that she should hear it on another occasion; and accordingly in the next birthday song, viz. that for the year 1692, he composed an air to the words 'May her bright example chase vice in troops out of the land,' the bass whereof is the tune to 'Cold and Raw.'"

Henry Purcell died in November, 1695, at the early age of thirty-seven, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. In 1876 was founded the Purcell Society, formed to do justice to the memory of the greatest English musician of his time.

CHAPTER III

BALLAD OPERAS AND EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY BALLADS

POPULAR ballads had, during the latter half of the seventeenth century, gone somewhat out of favour, at any rate with the upper classes of society. The old tunes and songs of England were being neglected, and there had arisen a craze for the Italian school of music, ridiculed by Henry Lawes in his setting of a contents table of an Italian song book, as mentioned in the last chapter. "All melody," says a writer, "was being frittered away into mere recitative, and there was needed the reassertion of the claims of rhythmic melody in music." But with the production of the *Beggar's Opera* in 1727 there came a great revulsion of popular taste.

The libretto of the *Beggar's Opera* was by John Gay, and the songs were all written either to old ballad tunes, English and Scotch, or to the tunes of the most popular songs of the day. It was originally intended, no doubt, to be a burlesque

of the then fashionable Italian opera, and the plot was of the slightest.

Gay offered the opera to Colley Cibber for Drury Lane, and when the latter refused it took it to John Rich, who brought it out at the Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre. It had an immediate and overwhelming success; after thirty-six performances Rich is said to have netted nearly £4000 and Gay some £700 odd; from which arose the popular saying that "it had made Gay rich and Rich gay."

The *Beggar's Opera* revived the old tunes of England. To its success is due the birth of Ballad Operas, operas into which a number of songs were introduced which had nothing to do with the plot, somewhat after the style of our modern musical comedies. These operas had the merit of keeping the old folk tunes alive; gradually, however, they were replaced by operas in which the music was partly introduced and partly new, and thus became the vehicle for diffusing a quantity of good songs of the popular type among the people, specially written by well-known composers for these operas.

Ballad Operas soon became quite the rage; they caught the public fancy and held it for a considerable number of years. In a curious old pamphlet, entitled *A Dialogue between the celebrated Mrs. Cibber and the no less celebrated*

Mrs. Woffington, which was published shortly after the death of Mrs. Cibber, there is a passage referring to the attraction of ballad operas for the public.

The shade of Mrs. Woffington asks what entertainments are now the fashion in town, and Mrs. Cibber replies: "They have been mostly amused with comic operas, consisting of very indifferent poetry put to old tunes, without character, and scarcely with any sentiment."

Mrs. Woffington: "Astonishing!"

Mrs. Cibber: "And more so when you consider that these harmonious pieces would fill houses when Garrick and myself, in Shakespeare's best plays, could scarcely pay expenses."

From which it would appear that there is really nothing new under the sun, and that the twentieth-century public's predilection for musical plays as compared with the more serious drama is simply a reversion to the popular taste of two centuries ago.

The eighteenth century, then, saw a revival of the taste for popular ballads, a revival that has lasted all through that and the following century up to the present day.

Turning to individual ballads, we come to those two rousing old ditties "The British Grenadiers" and "Down among the Dead Men," which both apparently date from the reign of

Queen Anne. No one seems to know who wrote the words of "The British Grenadiers"; the tune is an old English melody. "Down among the Dead Men" is supposed to have been written by a Mr. Dyer, and was first sung at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields. The composer is anonymous. It may be worth while recalling the first verse of this curious old song, in which the phrase "dead men" of course refers to the empty bottles, which, as they were emptied—and our ancestors of that period thoroughly understood the art of emptying them—were thrown under the table.

> Here's a health to the Queen, and a lasting peace,
> To faction an end, to wealth increase:
> Come, let's drink it while we have breath,
> For there's no drinking after death,
> And he that will this toast deny
> Down among the dead men let him lie.

From about the same period, or perhaps a little earlier, dates the famous "Vicar of Bray." This song was sung to an old melody known as "The Country Garden." There has been a good deal of controversy about the authorship of the words, and also about the particular Vicar around whom they were written. Nichols in his *Select Poems* says that the words were by a soldier in Colonel Fuller's troop of dragoons in the reign of George I, but this has been refuted

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in the *Musical Times* by Mr. Frank Kidson, who shows them to have been written by one Edward Ward, and included in the third edition of his *Miscellanies*, published in 1712, two years before George came to the throne.

According to one account, the worthy Vicar referred to in the song was one Pendleton, who afterwards became rector of St. Stephen's, Walbrook. The authority for this statement declares that in the reign of Edward VI, Lawrence Sanders, the martyr, expressed a fear to Pendleton that the latter would never be able to endure the persecution of the times, to which Pendleton answered confidently that *he* would never be made to relinquish his faith. However, apparently his resolution gave way, and he was made vicar of St. Stephen's in consequence, while Sanders was burnt at Smithfield.

Another account says that the song referred to a certain Simon Alleyn, or Allen, who was Vicar of Bray from 1540–88. However this may be, there is no doubt that the story is founded on historical fact and embellished with the natural licence of the poet.

A popular song-writer at the beginning of this century was Henry Carey, who was born towards the end of the previous century. In many cases he was composer and author too, and was also a successful dramatist.

Of all his songs undoubtedly the most popular, and the one by which he is best known to posterity, is "Sally in our Alley." He himself has given an account of how he came to write this favourite ballad, and relates the circumstances as follows :—

"A shoemaker's prentice, making holiday with his sweetheart, treated her with a sight of Bedlam, the puppet shows, the flying chairs, and all the elegancies of Moorfields, from whence proceeding to the Farthing Pye House, he gave her a collation of buns, cheese-cakes, gammon of bacon, stuffed beef, and bottled ale, through all which scenes the author dodged them. Charmed with the simplicity of their courtship, he drew from what he had witnessed this little sketch of nature, but being then young and obscure, he was very much ridiculed by some of his acquaintances for this performance, which nevertheless made its way into the polite world, and amply recompensed him by the applause of the divine Addison, who was pleased more than once to mention it with approbation."

Another of Carey's claims to fame rests on the supposition that he was the author and composer of our National Anthem "God Save the King." But the question is very much in doubt, and will probably never be conclusively settled. The tune has been said to bear a great resemblance to

an "ayre" attributed to Dr. John Bull, and he is often cited as the composer; while Mr. Frank Kidson has recently brought forward a new claim in favour of John Oswald, a Scotchman, which seems at any rate quite as valid as Carey's.

It is significant to note that Carey himself laid no claim to being the composer; it was left to be made by his son, George Savile Carey, who stated in 1795 that he had received the following letter from Dr. Harington, of Bath :—

"DEAR SIR,

"The anecdote you mention respecting your father's being the author and composer of 'God Save the King' is certainly true. That most respectable gentleman, my worthy friend and patient, Mr. Smith, has often told me what follows, viz. 'that your father came to him with the words and music, desiring him to correct the bass, which was not proper; and, at your father's request, Mr. Smith wrote another bass in correct harmony.' Mr. Smith, to whom I read your letter this day, repeated the same account, and on his authority I pledge myself for the truth of the statement.

"H. HARINGTON."

It seems curious to find that about 1743–5 there was extant a version of the words in

Latin, sung as a "Latin Chorus" at a concert given by John Travers, though to what tune they were sung is not known. The Latin words are as follows :—

O Deus optime
Salvum nunc facito
Regem nostrum ;
Sit læta victoria
Comes et gloria,
Salvum jam facito
Tu Dominum.

Exurgat Dominus,
Rebelles dissipet,
Et reprimat ;
Dolos confundito ;
Fraudes depellito ;
In te sit sita spes ;
O Salva nos.

Sir John Hawkins, in his *History of Music*, sums up Carey's abilities thus : "As a musician Carey seems to have been one of the first of the lowest rank ; and as a poet the last of that class of which D'Urfey was the first, with this difference, that in all the songs and poems written by him on wine, love, and such kind of subjects, he seems to have manifested an inviolable regard for decency and good manners."

A name that looms large in the musical life of the eighteenth century is that of Dr. Arne, who flourished from 1710 to 1773. Dr. Arne, whose

sister afterwards became the famous actress Mrs. Cibber, already referred to, married Cecilia Young, daughter of Dr. Young, himself a composer of several operas and oratorios, and numberless glees, canons, and catches. Arne's fame to-day rests almost entirely on his settings of Shakespeare songs, and his still more famous "Rule Britannia."

This song, which, as a writer has said, "will continue to be heard as long as love of country animates the breasts of Englishmen," was composed as a finale to the masque *Alfred*, written by Thomson and Mallet, by command of Frederick, Prince of Wales, for an entertainment at his house, Cleifden, Bucks, in August, 1740.

Wagner once declared that in the first eight notes of "Rule Britannia" the English character was portrayed—"its vigour, resolution, and eternal greatness." A contemporary author, writing in 1740, gives the names of the "three most popular songs that are now being sung in public" as "Rule Britannia," "God Save the King," and "The Roast Beef of Old England."

"Rule Britannia" has long been considered as the one really national English song, and has served equally as a call to arms and a glorification of victory. In 1798 excitement was at fever height

over Nelson's duel with the French fleet, and when the news of his victory at the Nile reached England the enthusiasm of the people knew no bounds. The following paragraph appeared in *The Times* of October 3rd in that year, under the heading of "Drury Lane":—

"After the play, the news of Admiral Nelson's glorious victory produced a burst of patriotic exultation that has rarely been witnessed in a theatre. 'Rule Britannia' was unanimously called for in every part of the house, and Messrs. Kelly, Dignum, Sedgwick, Miss Leak and Mrs. Bland, came forward and sang it, accompanied by numbers of the audience. It was called for and sung a second time. The acclamations were the loudest and most fervent we ever witnessed."

As to the authorship of the words, the claims of Thomson and Mallet appear to be fairly equal. They were joint authors of the whole libretto, and it seems impossible to decide as to which actually wrote the words of this song. Mr. Kidson is inclined to ascribe the honour to Mallet, but against this another writer declares that it is doubtful whether Mallet had any claim to it. The latter writer, by the way, says that David Mallet, whose real name appears to have been Mallock, was the man who wrote the letter of accusation which was the cause of the death

of Admiral Byng, who was shot, as the Frenchman so wittily put it, *pour encourager les autres;* for which service, he says, Mallet received a pension, and adds that he was "a purloiner of other people's wares." The point is one that must apparently be left wrapped in obscurity. It may be noted in passing that the original version ran "Britannia *rule* the waves," *rules* being a corruption that has crept in later.

In 1745 Arne was engaged as composer at Vauxhall Gardens, for which he wrote a very successful pastoral dialogue entitled "Colin and Phœbe." Of his settings of Shakespeare songs perhaps the best remembered is his "Where the bee sucks," a song of real and delicate beauty. He also composed a setting to Sir John Suckling's "Why so pale and wan, fond lover?" a lyric that has tempted many composers since his day.

Another song of his which attained a fair measure of popularity was "When forced from dear Hebe to part," the words of which were by Shenstone. A sort of answer to this song, entitled "Fair Hebe," was written by Lord Cantelupe, the words being sung at different times to two distinct old melodies, the second of which was popularly supposed to have been composed by Dr. Arne or his son.

"The lass with the delicate air" is a song that

has often been ascribed to Dr. Arne, but it is by his son Michael Arne. The words are given in *The Masque*, published in 1767, where it is stated that they were "set by Mr. Michael Arne, and sung by Miss Wright at Ranelagh." Miss Wright was the lady who afterwards became Mrs. Michael Arne. Two well-known songs of the day, both composed by Michael Arne, were "The Highland Laddie" and "Sweet Poll of Plymouth," the latter being written for O'Keefe's dramatic piece *The Positive Man*.

A contemporary of Arne's was Dr. Boyce, who was known chiefly as a composer of church music. His interest for us as a writer of ballads centres in the fact that he was the composer of "Hearts of Oak," which is noticed elsewhere among the other popular nautical ballads of the century.

William Jackson, of Exeter, deserves a passing mention here, though his songs are but little known to-day. But they enjoyed a certain amount of popularity at the time, notably his "Encompassed in an angel's frame" and "Time has not thinned my flowing hair." Mention, too, should be made of Dr. Arnold, composer of "Amo, amas, I love a lass," and "The Spanish Armada." Arnold also wrote a number of operas, which contained many songs that were popular in their day.

A rather famous old love ballad of the period was "O Nanny, wilt thou gang with me?" the words of which were written by Bishop Percy. Robert Burns once said that he considered this song to be the most beautiful composition of its kind in the English language. The music was composed by Thomas Carter for Vauxhall. Carter was at one time musical director of the Royalty Theatre, Goodman's Fields, and wrote a number of songs and catches, besides a comic opera, *Just in Time*, which he wrote for Covent Garden Theatre. But the only other song of his that attained much popularity was the naval ditty "Stand to your guns," which has long since passed into oblivion.

Ben Jonson's delightful old song "Drink to me only," from *The Forest*, was originally set as a glee, the composer being unknown. Few of the older ballads have enjoyed more lasting popularity than this. Apropos of this famous old lyric, Ben Davies, the well-known tenor, told me rather an amusing story. It appears that when he was in Messrs. Boosey and Co.'s offices in New York, Mr. Maxwell, the head of the firm in that city, showed him a letter he had received from an American composer, asking whether Ben Jonson still wrote lyrics, as he admired his lyrics so much and would like to set some! "Drink to me only," by

the way, is one of Ben Davies's favourite songs.

To come back to history and the old-time ballads, Giardini's setting of Goldsmith's "When lovely woman stoops to folly," in *The Vicar of Wakefield*, must not be forgotten. Giardini was a magnificent violinist, but not a great success as a composer.

Thomas Linley was the composer of Sheridan's "Here's to the maiden of bashful fifteen," in *The School for Scandal*. Sheridan was Linley's son-in-law, and the latter also wrote the music for *The Duenna*. Linley took high rank as a composer; and his lovely five-part madrigal "Let me, careless," is still well known.

Mention may perhaps be made here of two old Scotch songs, "Robin Adair" and "Auld Robin Gray." The former, it should be said, was originally an Irish melody, "Eileen Aroon," but gradually became credited with being Scotch when associated with the words of "Robin Adair." These words have often been assigned to Burns, but it appears more likely that they were written by Lady Caroline Keppell, while under the influence of an unfortunate love affair. Mr. Fitzgerald, in his *Stories of Famous Songs*, says that her lover was one Robert Adair, and that they were kept apart by her hard-hearted parents. The lady eventually became so ill with

disappointed love, that her parents at length gave way, and all ended happily. The song used to be sung with great success by Tenducci at Ranelagh.

The words of "Auld Robin Gray" were written by Lady Anne Lindsay, afterwards Lady Anne Barnard, when a young girl. The authorship remained anonymous for many years, and was much disputed. Curiously enough, the same happened in the case of the music, which was composed by the Rev. William Leeves in 1770, but was not generally known to be his until about 1812.

"The Lass of Richmond Hill," composed by James Hook, and said to be a favourite of George III, is a song that has retained a good deal of popularity. Hook, who, by the way, was the father of the famous humorist Theodore Hook, also composed the music to "Within a mile of Edinboro' Town." His contemporary John Percy is now only remembered as being the composer of "Wapping Old Stairs."

We next come to a composer whom the writer in *Grove* says "was perhaps the most original English composer since Purcell," namely, William Shield. Among his most popular songs are "The Thorn," "The Wolf," "The Heaving of the Lead," "Old Towler," "The Arethusa," "The Ploughboy," and "The Post Captain."

But one of the most famous of all, of course, is his "Friar of Orders Grey," composed for O'Keefe's opera *Robin Hood.* He was also stated to have composed the present melody of "Auld Lang Syne," the words of which were polished up by Burns, but this is very open to question. It is curious, however, to note that there is a great similarity between parts of this melody and Shield's popular song "The Thorn." Many of Shield's songs were written for Mrs. Billington to sing at Ranelagh.

The eighteenth century was particularly rich in nautical ballads, in which connection the name of Charles Dibdin rises to the mind at once. There had been a few sea songs of note before Dibdin's time. One of these was "Admiral Benbow," a fine old song, which dates from the early part of the century.

The subject of this ballad is mentioned in Evelyn's *Diary*, under the date of January 1702–3. "News of Admiral Benbow's conflict with the French Fleet in the West Indies, in which he gallantly behaved himself, and was wounded, and would have had extraordinary success, had not four of his men-of-war stood spectators without coming to his assistance; for this, two of their commanders were tried by a council of war and executed; a third was condemned to perpetual imprisonment, loss of pay,

and incapacity to serve in the future. The fourth died." The song, as now extant, contains no reference to the treachery and punishment of the captains, and it is probable that the original edition of the lyric was a very much longer one.

Dr. Boyce's "Hearts of Oak" has already been briefly mentioned. The words of this song were written by David Garrick. The title was originally "Heart of Oak," *Hearts* being a later corruption which has crept in regardless of the fact that it destroys the sense of the expression. A fine old song, the first verse is worth recalling here :—

> Come, cheer up, my lads, 'tis to glory we steer,
> To add something more to this wonderful year ;
> To honour we call you, as free men, not slaves,
> For who are so free as the sons of the waves?
> Heart of oak are our ships,
> Jolly tars are our men ;
> We always are ready,
> Steady, boys, steady,
> We'll fight and we'll conquer again and again.

The "wonderful year" referred to in the lyric is 1759, the year of Pitt's greatest triumphs, Minden, Quiberon, and Quebec.

There is one other sea song which must be mentioned before we come to Dibdin, and that is the famous "Bay of Biscay." The composer, John Davy, was a native of Devonshire, and

evinced a propensity for music at a very early age. The story goes that he was discovered by a blacksmith at the age of six in an attic, with some twenty to thirty horseshoes he had taken from the forge. From these shoes he had selected enough to form a complete octave, and was playing thereon a very fair imitation of the Crediton chimes.

"The Death of the Smuggler" was another song of his which became popular at the time, but it is by the "Bay of Biscay" that he will continue to be known. The words of the latter were written by Andrew Cherry.

It is said of Charles Dibdin that he wrote in all some three thousand songs, words and music; but whether this is true or not it is impossible to say. He certainly was a most prolific writer and a very versatile being. He was composer, poet, actor, vocalist, and public entertainer all in one. But his forte was, of course, the writing and composing of nautical ballads. It has frequently been said that Dibdin really knew very little about the sea and sailors, and that he often made technical mistakes in his lyrics. An attack of this nature was made upon his reputation in *Blackwood's Magazine* in 1829, and his son Thomas wrote to the same magazine to protest against the article. In this letter Thomas Dibdin pointed out that Incledon, the famous singer,

who sang Charles Dibdin's songs continually, had himself been a sailor, and would have been the first to notice any inaccuracies. "I have never heard him," concludes Thomas, "object to a single *line* of any of my father's because it should perhaps have been a *rope*."

Dibdin's most popular song is, of course, "Tom Bowling," written on the death of his eldest brother, Captain Dibdin. Another very popular song of his was "Poor Jack." It is said that he sold "Poor Jack" and eleven other songs for £60! The fact that the publisher had made a profit of something like £500 out of "Poor Jack" alone induced Dibdin a few years later to become his own publisher, and he opened premises in the Strand under the name of "Sans-Souci," which led a popular wit of the day to compose the following quatrain :—

> What more conviction need there be
> That Dibdin's plan will do :
> Since now we see him sans souci
> Who late was sans six sous.

The list of Dibdin's sea songs is so enormous that it is impossible to do more than mention one or two of the more popular. Such were "Saturday Night at Sea," "'Twas in the Good Ship Rover," "I Sailed from the Downs in the Nancy," "Farewell, My Trim-Built Wherry"—a great favourite of John Braham's, the tenor, and

the well-known duet "All's Well!" which was constantly sung by Braham and Incledon with tremendous effect, and, in more recent times, by Santley and Sims Reeves.

Dibdin died in 1814, and was buried in St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, Camden Town, and a verse from "Tom Bowling" formed his epitaph :—

> His form was of the manliest beauty,
> His heart was kind and soft,
> Faithful below he did his duty,
> But now he's gone aloft.

His son, Thomas Dibdin, was a well-known dramatist, and wrote the words of the once popular song "A Right Little Tight Little Island" in 1797, when Napoleon was threatening invasion. The words were set to the melody of "The Rogues' March."

In his memoirs Thomas Dibdin says that he wrote a burletta to ridicule the collecting of troops and boats at Boulogne, entitled *The British Raft*, for which the manager of Sadler's Wells paid him five guineas, and adds : "One song in it, 'The Snug Little Island,' was so successful that I sold it to Longman and Co., of Cheapside, for fifteen guineas, three times the price of the whole burletta! Mr. Longman told me afterwards the house cleared nine hundred pounds by this song."

One other naval ballad, "The Death of Nelson," remains to be mentioned, but this belongs, of course, to the early nineteenth century. Its composer was John Braham, the famous singer, and the song is referred to in the following chapter.

CHAPTER IV

CONCERTS AND CONCERT SINGERS OF THE PERIOD

PROBABLY the first lucrative concerts ever given in London were those instituted by John Banister, a famous violinist, in 1672. On December 30 of that year the following advertisement appeared in the *London Gazette* :—

"These are to give notice that at Mr. John Banister's house, now called the Musick-school, over against the George Tavern in White Friars, this present Monday, will be musick performed by excellent masters, beginning precisely at four of the clock in the afternoon, and every afternoon for the future, precisely at the same hour."

These concerts seem to have continued till 1678, the year before his death, when they were perhaps abandoned owing to the formation of the first musical club of whose existence anything is known, namely, the one established in 1678 by Thomas Britton, a coal-dealer, of which Banister appears to have been a member. The meetings of this club used to be held in a long, low room over Britton's shop, which was reached

by a staircase outside the house. Amongst those who used to attend them were Handel, Dr. Pepusch (who "arranged" the music of the *Beggar's Opera*), John Banister, John Hughes, the poet, and Wollaston, the painter, whose portrait of Britton may be seen in the National Gallery.

Admission was free to begin with, but after a while it was agreed that all visitors were to pay a subscription of ten shillings a year. Of the performers Handel used to play the organ, Banister the violin, and Sir Roger L'Estrange, one of the earliest patrons of the club, the 'cello. Britton died in 1714, his death being caused, it is said, by a fright that was given him by a ventriloquist, from which he never recovered.

After his death the Academy of Ancient Music was founded, the meetings taking place at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, in the Strand, under the direction of Dr. Pepusch. It came to an end in 1792, after the death of the latter.

Meanwhile the Hanover Square Music Rooms had been built in 1775 for Gallini, the Italian dancing-master, who taught the children of George III dancing. For some time the rooms were used for occasional concerts, and from 1804 the "Concerts of Ancient Music" were given here. There is a story told of Lord North in connection with these concerts. His lordship, who was

not overfond of music, refused to attend them, much to the disgust of George III. "Your brother the Bishop never misses them, my lord," said the King. "Sir," replied Lord North, "if I were as deaf as my brother the Bishop I would never miss them either."

The last concert ever given in these rooms took place on December 19, 1874, after which they were considerably altered, and opened two years later as the "Hanover Square Club."

With regard to this concert there is an interesting paragraph in the Life of Sterndale Bennett, by his son, which is worth quoting here. "In December, Bennett, on hearing that the Hanover Square Rooms were to be used no longer for music, but in future for the coffee-room of a club, expressed a wish that the Academy students should give the last concert there. A special performance was accordingly arranged for December 19. One of the students afterwards wrote of Bennett's connection with this occasion: 'His conservative spirit made him grieve over the loss of the Hanover Square Rooms, sacred with musical traditions of the past. . . . The very last concert in the Rooms was given by the students of the Royal Academy of Music just before Christmas, 1874, and strangely enough it was the last concert he ever attended. Many who were present noticed that he had a sad,

far-away look that night. Possibly the idea was in his mind that such changes could not affect him long. Twice during that evening he left the concert-room expressing his intention of going home, and each time returned, as if he did not know how to tear himself away, though he felt unequal to remaining.'" Bennett died a few weeks later, on February 1, 1875.

But for popular concerts the most famous resorts were the gardens of Vauxhall and Ranelagh. At Vauxhall the concerts were at first purely instrumental, but in 1745 singing was introduced, and the concerts became more popular than ever in consequence. Ranelagh in time outdid Vauxhall in popularity. Here in 1751 morning concerts were given twice a week as well as the evening ones.

The Marylebone Gardens also enjoyed considerable popularity. They were opened about the middle of the seventeenth century, and passed through varying vicissitudes, till in 1763 they were taken over by "Tommy" Lowe, the popular tenor. Six years later Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Arnold became the proprietor, but in 1778 the gardens were finally closed to the public.

All these places of entertainment did much to foster public appreciation of "popular" ballads, and may be said, in fact, to have been forerunners of the ballad concerts of to-day. Some of the

performers objected at first to singing in the open air, but that this objection was soon overcome is apparent from the long list of popular singers who appeared at these concerts year after year.

Of the lady singers of the period must be mentioned first of all Mrs. Bracegirdle, who sang in public from 1680 to 1707. She was a great favourite, and excelled, it is said, in the singing of Purcell's songs. Miss Rafter, an Irish girl, afterwards Mrs. Clive, made her first appearance at Drury Lane in 1728, and continued singing in public till 1769. She was more of an actress than a singer. Speaking of her voice Dr. Burney says: "Her singing, which was intolerable when she meant it to be fine, in ballad-farces and songs of humour was, like her comic acting, everything it should be."

Cecilia Young, who afterwards married Dr. Arne, has already been mentioned. Of her it was said that "her style of singing was infinitely superior to that of any other Englishwoman of her time."

Dr. Arne's sister, better known as Mrs. Cibber, was vocalist first and actress afterwards, to become, in the latter capacity, the greatest tragedian of her time. But she continued to follow her career as a vocalist, and made a wonderful success in oratorio, Handel having composed the contralto songs in the *Messiah* especially for her.

Anne Catley, the daughter of a coachman, her mother being a washerwoman, made her first appearance in public as a singer at the early age of ten. In later years she became a great favourite at Marylebone Gardens. She appears to have possessed a charming voice and to have been a great beauty, but was noted for being a trifle eccentric in her manner.

Miss Brent, afterwards Mrs. Pinto, was another noted singer of the period, and with her must be mentioned Miss Eliza Farren (afterwards the Countess of Derby) and Mrs. Billington, whose mother had been a favourite singer at Vauxhall. Mrs. Billington had a long career, her first appearance in public as a singer being made at the age of fourteen. She died in 1818.

A singer with a very sweet voice, who was more of an amateur than a professional, was Mrs. Jordan, whose real name was Dorothy Bland. She is supposed to have been the composer of "The Blue Bells of Scotland," a song which she sang a great deal in public.

Miss Stephens, who afterwards became the Countess of Essex, may be mentioned here, though she belongs by right to the following century, her first appearance in public being in 1813. She was the creator of "Auld Robin Gray," which attained an immense popularity from her constant singing of it.

Turning to the male singers, it is only possible to mention a few of the more famous here. Two rival tenors appeared in the field in the early part of the eighteenth century, John Beard in 1736, and Thomas ("Tommy") Lowe in 1740. The latter has already been mentioned as having become the proprietor of Marylebone Gardens for a time. He was originally a Spitalfields weaver, and was the possessor of an untrained but extremely pleasant voice. While he flourished at Vauxhall, Beard was singing at Ranelagh, and the rival managements played them off one against the other for several seasons.

Brief mention may be made of Joseph Vernon, Charles Banister, a fine bass singer with a marvellous falsetto, and Charles Dignum, a popular singer at Vauxhall and the composer of several ballads, after which we come to the two most famous names of all, Charles Incledon and John Braham.

Incledon was one of the finest tenors England has ever produced. He began life as a sailor, and he followed this profession for four years. Then his singing attracted the attention of his superior officers, and he eventually decided to give up the navy and try his fortune on the concert platform. His success was immediate, and he quickly won his way into public favour.

"He had a bold and manly manner of singing," says a contemporary writer, "mixed, however, with considerable feeling which went to the hearts of his countrymen. He sang like a true Englishman. . . . His forte was ballad, and ballad not of the modern cast of whining or wanton sentiment, but the original manly, energetic strain of an earlier and better age of English poesy and English song-writing, such as 'Black-Ey'd Susan' and 'The Storm'; the bold and cheering hunting song, or the love song of Shield, breathing the chaste and simple grace of genuine English melody."

Incledon was an unrivalled singer of nautical songs, many of which, and "The Storm" in particular, he used to sing in character. "The Storm," it may be mentioned here, was composed by G. A. Stevens, and must not be confused with a song of the same name written by John Hullah, a composer who belongs to the early nineteenth century.

Incledon was a very vain man, and there are many stories of him current to illustrate this. He himself used to tell the following story of Mrs. Siddons apropos of his singing of "The Storm": "Mrs. Siddons once paid me one of the finest compliments I ever received. I sang 'The Storm' after dinner; she cried and sobbed like a child. Taking both my hands she said, 'All

that I and my brother ever did is nothing to the effect you produce.'"

"Black-Ey'd Susan" was another of Incledon's great songs. There is an anecdote told of Incledon in connection with this song. While staying at a country inn he had quarrelled during the evening with an army officer. Incledon imagined that he had closed the quarrel by going to bed, but the officer, left downstairs to brood over his wrongs, evidently thought otherwise. Making his way to Incledon's bedroom, he found the famous singer fast asleep. When he had succeeded in waking him, a matter of some difficulty, the officer demanded satisfaction. "Satisfaction?" said Incledon sleepily; "well, you shall have it." Whereupon he sat up in bed and sang "Black-Ey'd Susan" in his best style. "There," he said, lying down again, "my singing of that song has given satisfaction to thousands, and it will have to satisfy you!" Then he turned over and went to sleep.

One more anecdote of Incledon will perhaps bear repeating. One day he met Richard Suett, the comedian, at Tattersall's. "Come to buy a horse?" asked Suett. "Yes," said Incledon. "But what are you doing here, Dickey? Do you think you know the difference between a horse and an ass?" "Oh yes," replied Suett solemnly, "I should know you among a thousand."

In 1817 Incledon visited America, where he enjoyed a considerable success. On his return he travelled through the provinces, giving an entertainment under the name of "The Wandering Melodist." Early in 1826 he was seized with paralysis at Worcester, and died after a few days' illness.

Braham made his appearance a few years later than Incledon, and continued singing for many years after the latter's death. It is remarkable that two such exceptionally fine tenor singers should have flourished at practically the same time.

Braham's real name was Abraham. Parke in his *Musical Memories* tells a story of Braham's little boy, which, he remarks, would appear to establish both the child's and his father's nationality. The boy possessed a very sweet voice, and was once asked to sing by a gentleman dining in the house. He demanded sixpence for a song. "Can't you make it less?" the gentleman asked. "Not for one," said the child, "but I'll sing you three for a shilling!"

Braham himself made his initial appearance in public at the age of thirteen. This was at Covent Garden Theatre, April 21, 1787, when the following announcement appeared on the bills: "At the end of Act I, 'The soldier tired of war's alarms,' by Master Braham, being his first appearance on any stage."

Planché, writing in 1872, says of Braham: "He was the greatest English tenor perhaps ever known, was about the worst actor ever seen, and the most unromantic person in appearance that can well be imagined."

Braham was a composer as well as a singer, and made it an almost invariable rule to write the music for his own parts in the various operas in which he appeared. But for us his name as a composer will always be associated with the immortal "Death of Nelson," which he wrote for his opera *The Americans*. It has been said that nothing finer in the way of ballad singing has ever been heard than Braham's rendering of this song.

Mrs. Byrne, in her *Gossip of the Century*, has given a vivid and somewhat amusing account of an occasion on which she heard Braham sing it at Brighton. "The orchestra struck up 'Twas in Trafalgar's Bay,' and even before he had opened his lips the very symphony was applauded to the echo. This spirited and also pathetic song touched the hearts of the audience, and their shouts for a second encore were so persistent that it was in vain the singer tried to pacify them with smiles and bows; no, it was a marine audience, and a sea song they were determined to have. A demand was made for the 'Bay of Biscay,' and whatever Braham's intention may have been

there was nothing for it but compliance. He sang the 'Bay of Biscay'; the sudden lull was positively startling—it was a calm in which after the discordant cries his melodious voice seemed additionally sweet, but no sooner had the last mellifluous note died away than a simultaneous and intensified shout burst forth, the shrill cries of women and hurrahs of men combining to support the bravos and clappings of ladies as well as gentlemen."

Mr. Baring-Gould tells a story of Lady Hamilton and Braham's singing of 'The Death of Nelson" which I cannot refrain from repeating here. Mathews, the comedian, being informed by Lady Hamilton that she intended to come and see *The Americans* at the Lyceum, did his best to dissuade her, thinking that the subject of the opera would be likely to distress her. However, Lady Hamilton disregarded the warning, and Mathews, seeing her come into a private box one evening, went to Spring, the box-keeper, and, taking out his watch, said, "Spring, I give you notice that at twenty minutes past nine o'clock (the usual hour at which the 'Death of Nelson' was sung) a large lady, now sitting in the stage-box opposite, will be taken very ill and require assistance. On no account be out of the way, and have ready a glass of water and a bottle of smelling-salts." Precisely at twenty minutes past nine

Braham began his song, and before the second verse was finished sobs and screams were heard ringing through the theatre. Spring, who had been keeping an uneasy eye upon the box, rushed into the green-room for the water and smelling-salts, exclaiming as he passed Mathews in the wings, "Well now, sir, you *are* a conjurer! The lady's in a fit and to the very minute too!" Ever afterwards Spring looked on Mathews as being possessed of some uncanny power of divining future events.

The careers of Incledon and Braham, more particularly the latter, bring us well into the period which is covered by the title of this book, and may thus be said to form a connecting link between the earlier and the later ballads. And it is something of a coincidence that the year in which Braham finally retired as a singer was the very year in which Sims Reeves made his first appearance in public. An apt illustration of the adage *Le roi est mort! Vive le roi!*

PART II

A CENTURY OF BALLADS
(1810–1910)

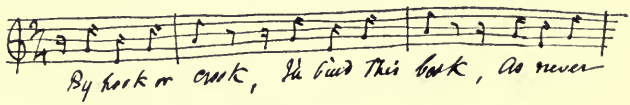
MEMORANDUM.

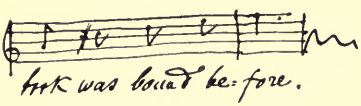
From
J. L. HATTON,
"NAPIER HOUSE,"
Margate.

To
Ole Joe

20th Jan: 1872

By dis post I send all the numbers that of de beautiful Opera of Fidelio — a charming edition — what a pity it is that the art of music Engraving should have been lost! — Let the binding be worthy the Composer — the man who stitches it should sing as he works:





What are we to do for an Overture? — it would do to have any of the modern engraving.

Signed Giovanni
the Herald of Margate.

CHARACTERISTIC LETTER FROM J. L. HATTON TO A MUSICAL FRIEND.

CHAPTER I

SOME EARLY NINETEENTH-CENTURY BALLADS

"IN the early part of the nineteenth century," says a writer, "the simplicity of the old form of ballad was fast disappearing. Singers wanted something that would show off their voice more, and composers no longer wanted to be kept to the limits of the ballad proper."

This statement seems to be borne out in great measure by Edward Fitzball in his *Thirty-five Years of a Dramatic Author's Life*, where, writing in 1839, he says: "Ballad singing is likely very soon to be exploded, unless, indeed, some new bewitching Bland or Waylett spring up with a voice capable of fascinating English ears by *simple* and *pure melody*, instead of what very few understand, however much they affect it, that is to say, the grand scena, the bravura, the brilliante. Everybody has heard the old anecdote of the lady who explained to Dr. Johnson the difficulties of the scena she had been executing, and the doctor's celebrated blunder,

'I wish to goodness, madam, such difficulties were impossible.'

"I ought, perhaps," Fitzball goes on, "to apologise for this digression in favour of ballads and ballad singing, which I am always ready to champion, looking upon their sweet combination as a sort of national art."

From this it would appear as though the popular ballad had, for a time at any rate, gone out of favour; but the period of depression cannot have been a very long one. Ballad operas continued to flourish, and individual ballads to be written and sung to an even greater extent than ever. Nor does there seem to have been any falling off in either their simplicity or their tunefulness, which attributes, however much they may be scoffed at by superior critics, are very essential qualities in any song that is to reach the hearts of the people.

A ballad which had immense popularity in the first half of this century was "Meet me by moonlight alone," by J. A. Wade, who was also the composer of "Love was once a little boy." The sales of "Meet me by moonlight" were said to be something enormous for many years after its publication. Unfortunately Wade was a very intemperate man, throwing away one chance after another, and was soon reduced to a state of almost destitution. Eventually he was

engaged by the Chevalier Anati, then living at Winchester, to teach his daughter music. Apparently Wade induced his patron to join him in his drinking-bouts, and the story goes that one night when they were toping together Wade, more than three-parts drunk, proposed that he should marry Anati's daughter. This was too much for the Chevalier's pride, which, intoxicated as he was, rose up in arms at this suggestion, and he promptly kicked Wade out of the house there and then. Wade died in London a few years later.

In 1829 appeared the highly popular ballad "Love's Ritornella," or "Gentle Zitella," composed by Tom Cooke. It was first produced by a Mr. Wallack, an actor, who appears to have spoken it rather than sung it. Cooke was a noted tenor singer who appeared at Drury Lane and Covent Garden, being later engaged as musical director at both places. Among the pupils to whom he taught singing were Maria Tree and Sims Reeves. He was also the composer of the famous duet "Love and War."

Tom Cooke was an actor as well as musician, and a very amusing man. Mr. F. L. Wellman, in his *Day in Court*, tells the following amusing anecdote of Cooke's appearance as a witness in a copyright case, which had to do with the alleged piracy of a popular song :—

"On his cross-examination by Sir James Scar-

lett, that learned gentleman rather flippantly questioned him thus :—

"'Sir, you say that the two melodies are the same but different. Now, what do you mean by that?'

"To this Cooke promptly replied: 'I said that the notes in the two copies are alike, but with a different accent, the one being in common time and the other in six-eight time; and consequently the position of the accent of the notes is different.'

"*Sir James:* 'What is musical accent?'

"*Cooke:* 'My terms are nine guineas a quarter, sir.'

"*Sir James:* 'Never mind your terms here. I ask you what is musical accent? Can you see it?'

"*Cooke:* 'No, Sir James.'

"*Sir James:* 'Can you feel it?'

"*Cooke:* 'A musician can.' (Great laughter.)

"*Sir James* (*very angry*): 'Now, pray, sir, don't beat about the bush, but explain to his lordship and the jury, who are expected to know nothing about music, the meaning of what you call accent.'

"*Cooke:* 'Accent in music is a certain stress laid upon a particular note in the same manner as you would lay stress upon a given word for the purpose of being better understood. Thus if I were to say, "You are an ass," the accent rests

on ass ; but if I were to say, "*You* are an ass," it rests on you, Sir James.'

"Reiterated shouts of laughter by the whole court, in which the Bench itself joined, followed this repartee."

"Gentle Zitella" was written for the opera *The Brigand*, the libretto of which was by J. R. Planché, the dramatist. The song was originally published by Latour, and when Chappell bought Latour's business £500 was added to the purchase price on account of this song alone, Chappell being said to have made a profit of £1000 out of it during the first year it was in his possession.

Planché in his Memoirs declares that the tune was his as well as the words. He says: "Tom Cooke received £25 for the arrangement of the air, and some further benefit in the exchange of a piano, but when he asked for further remuneration Latour referred him to Chappell and Chappell back again to Latour."

Planché himself got nothing beyond what he had received for the libretto. It appears to have been a custom at that time for an author to allow the composer to publish any separate song in an opera without paying the author of the words any further fee. Owing to the success of "Gentle Zitella" and of "Rise, gentle moon" (out of the opera *Charles XII*, composed by John Barnett),

which was published by D'Almaine, Planché determined to get this state of things altered. Accordingly, when *The Mason of Buda*, with music by George Rodwell, was produced, Planché entered a protest, and demanded an additional fee before publication. His protest was disregarded and the music published, whereupon he went to Cumberland, the proprietor of the theatre, and assigned the whole rights to him. D'Almaine had then to deal with Cumberland, and was eventually obliged to pay.

Planché adds, in concluding his account: "I recollect being warmly thanked by my old acquaintance Fitzball, to whom D'Almaine had sent in a great pucker, and paid him for a host of things for which otherwise he would not have received a farthing; and from that time I have been fairly paid by the music publishers for the right of printing the words of my operas."

The same year which saw the publication of "Gentle Zitella," 1829, is noteworthy for the appearance of probably the first lithographed song-title, which was exhibited in Willis's music-shop window in the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly.

The song in question was "I'd be a Butterfly," the words and music of which were by Thomas Haynes Bayly. Bayly was also the author of "Oh no, we never mention her," said to be the outcome of an unfortunate love affair—a curious

method, if so, of giving ease to a wounded heart. He was a prolific lyric-writer, and occasional composer, the one-time famous "We met—'twas in a crowd" being an instance of his double capacity. A popular lyric of his was "Isle of Beauty," the music of which was by T. A. Rawlings.

A composer who set a number of Haynes Bayly's lyrics was J. P. Knight. One of the most famous of these was "She wore a wreath of roses," which enjoyed great popularity for many years. While in America in 1839 Knight wrote the still more famous "Rocked in the cradle of the deep," which was followed, on his return to England, by "Say, what shall my song be to-night," "The Dream" (words by the Hon. Mrs. Norton), a song that was all the rage at one time; "The Watchman," "The Anchor," and "Queen of the Silver Bow."

About this time there sprang up the custom of parodying, in the shape of "answers," the well-known songs of the day, and the copyright law as it then existed seems to have afforded no protection against the practice. Thomas Haynes Bayly's "I'd be a Butterfly" was shortly afterwards followed by "I'd be a Nightingale," his "Oh no, we never mention her" by "Oh yes, we often mention her," and John Barnett's "Rise, Gentle Moon" by "Rise, Gentle Star."

About the year 1833 appeared the popular song "Alice Grey," by Mrs. Millard, but no other songs of hers appear to have survived, unless we take into account that quaint ditty "If I had a thousand a year," which was still popular some years ago.

"Kathleen Mavourneen" has long been a household word. The composer was F. Nicholls Crouch, who wrote a great number of songs during the second quarter of the nineteenth century, the words being by Mrs. Julia Crawford, an Irishwoman. Mr. Fitzgerald in his book says that the publisher D'Almaine was supposed to have made over £15,000 by this song, which, it is said, he bought from Crouch for a £10 note, though George Augustus Sala used to declare that five pounds sterling was the guerdon of Mr. Crouch for the song in question.

"It is recorded," says a recent writer, "that on the death of the sole surviving partner in the firm of publishers who owned the copyright of 'Kathleen Mavourneen' the music-plates and copyright were sold in 1865 for five hundred and thirty pounds."

"Kathleen Mavourneen" is one of Clara Butt's favourite ballads; "her interpretation of which," says the same writer, "is dramatically perfect, and fills one with 'thoughts to deep for words.'"

Crouch appears to have been a ballad-singer

himself, and first sang "Kathleen Mavourneen" in MS. at Plymouth, where it had a regular ovation. In 1845 he left England and settled in America, where, according to an account of his career which appeared in the *Era*, he sang "Kathleen Mavourneen" in public at the age of eighty-nine. "Zephyrs of Love" is perhaps the only other song of his which is remembered now.

It is necessary, in referring to the songs of this period, to make some reference to Moore's Irish Melodies. Moore wrote over a hundred of these beautiful poems, adapting them to old Irish airs, which he arranged himself. "The Last Rose of Summer" was written to the tune of "The Groves of Blarney," and "The Meeting of the Waters" to the old air "The Old Head of Dennis."

"The Last Rose of Summer" was a great favourite with Catherine Hayes, the celebrated soprano, who flourished in the first half of the nineteenth century. She used to tell the story of an occasion when she sang it in the Limerick Theatre Royal, where it had an immense success. As the applause began to die down a boy in the gallery shouted, "Once again, Catherine darlin'! Sure your mother was a nightingale!"

Moore used to sing these songs to his own accompaniment. He was the possessor of a small but very sweet voice, which Leigh Hunt once compared "to a flute softened down to

mere breathing." Frequently he seems to have moved his hearers, and even himself, to tears. Mrs. Byrne, in her *Gossip of the Century*, quotes a letter from Mr. N. P. Willis describing a party at Lady Blessington's, in which he says: "We all sat round the piano; after two or three songs of Lady Blessington's choice, Moore rambled over the keys awhile, and then the stillness of the room becoming absolute silence, he softly, and as it were gradually, melted into 'When first I met you,' with a pathos that beggars description. When the last word had died away he arose and took Lady Blessington's hand, said 'Good night,' and was gone before a word was uttered."

Moore composed several original songs, amongst which were "Love Thee, Dearest," "One dear Smile," and "The Canadian Boat Song," which for a long while was thought to be a native melody, but was afterwards claimed by Moore as his.

Another Irishman, Samuel Lover, may briefly be mentioned here. Lover was song-writer, novelist, and painter all in one. Like Moore, he made a practice of singing his own songs at the piano; and he won the latter's friendship by producing at the Moore banquet in 1818 a lively eulogy on the poet. In his later years his eyesight began to fail, and as he could no longer paint, he devised an entertainment which he gave

at the Princess's Concert Rooms, and called his "Irish Evenings." Of his original songs, which are practically forgotten now, "Rory O'More" enjoyed a considerable popularity for some years.

Charles E. Horn's fame as a composer is still kept alive by the well-known ballads "I've been roaming" and "Cherry Ripe." The latter especially has won universal and lasting popularity. The lines are said to have been suggested to Herrick by the old seventeenth-century poem "There is a garden in her face," and it has also been said that the melody was suggested to Horn by Attwood's song "Let me die." But, however that may be, "Cherry Ripe" is one of the ballads that has lived, and is likely to live for many years yet.

The song was first sung by Madame Vestris. This lady was something of a character in her way. She was the daughter of Bartolozzi, and was twice married, her second husband being Charles Mathews the younger.

Mrs. Byrne says of her, "Her brilliant singing of 'Cherry Ripe,' which was written for her, is still fresh in my memory, though I entirely forget into what play she introduced it, but I think she was playing Phœbe in *Paul Pry*."

Madame Vestris, by the way, drew down upon her the censure of certain musical journals by

demanding a sum of £20 from Charles Dance, a composer, as a royalty for continuing to sing his song, being apparently the first singer to introduce the practice.

There is one other song of Horn's which ought to be mentioned. This is "The Deep, Deep Sea," made popular by Madame Malibran, the famous contralto, and daughter of Manuel Garcia, who had such a tragic and eventful life, and died at the early age of twenty-eight.

A singer who sang with Malibran in Mazzinghi's duet "When a little farm we keep" was John Parry, the baritone. He was also an excellent pianist. In 1831 he appeared as a singer of ballads, accompanying himself on the harp. He is generally supposed to have been the composer of "Jenny Jones," a song that was immensely popular at the time. For a long while the composer remained unknown, and Charles Mathews introduced the song into a dramatic piece in 1835, singing it in character, under the impression that it was a national melody. "Nora, the Pride of Kildare," is also ascribed to Parry.

Parry was also quite a capable painter, and studied for some time with W. P. Frith, but eventually abandoned painting for music. In his later years he was attacked by a nervous disease, which rendered him at times quite hysterical.

Often before a concert he would be found in floods of tears, sobbing out that he was convinced he was going to break down, and this eventually necessitated his retirement from public life.

"The Village Blacksmith" was composed about this time, the music being by W. H. Weiss, the bass singer, who flourished from 1820–67. It is a song that is still being sung to-day by Hayden Coffin and other popular singers.

The subject of "The Village Blacksmith" is said to have been Thaddeus W. Tyler, of Lynn, near Boston, U.S.A., who died quite recently at the age of seventy-six. Tyler often used to speak of his acquaintance with Longfellow, and declared that the latter showed him the poem in manuscript after it was completed.

Amongst other ballads that were popular in the first half of the nineteenth century may be mentioned "My Boyhood's Home" and "Under the Tree," by E. J. Loder; "They mourn me dead in my father's halls" and the "Banks of the blue Moselle," by G. H. Rodwell; "Away to the mountain's brow," "Come, dwell with me," and "The Soldier's Tear," by Alexander Lee; "Phyllis is my only joy," by J. W. Hobbs, the tenor singer; "The Cuckoo," by Margaret Casson; Franz Abt's "When the Swallows" and "Kathleen Aroon"; and a setting of Thomas

Carew's "He that loves a rosy cheek" by Miss M. B. Hawes.

Nor must we forget the Chevalier Neukomm's setting of Barry Cornwall's "The sea, the sea, the open sea," which Charles Mackay describes in his Reminiscences as "the lustiest musical nuisance that ever took possession of the town, and that swept everything else before it with remorseless and irresistible tyranny." The Chevalier, who arrived in England in 1831, also wrote "Napoleon's Midnight Review," which made quite a sensation at the time.

One other composer remains to be mentioned as dating from this period, though his work covers a large portion of the century. This was John Blockley, the music-publisher, who was born in 1800 and died in 1882. He was the composer of a large number of popular songs, of which some of the best known were the "Arab's Farewell," "Love Not," "Many happy returns of the day" (still sung at birthday parties), "The Englishman," "The Charge of the Light Brigade," "The Christian Martyr," "Hearts and Homes," and "Listening Angels."

One of his biggest successes, however, was a so-called "Scotch" song, "Jessie's Dream," which was written under somewhat peculiar circumstances. The author of the words was Benjamin Britten, who wrote a number of popular

lyrics under the pseudonym of Grace Campbell. It was at the time of the Indian Mutiny, and Britten had been reading in *The Times* a letter from a lady who was one of the rescued party at Lucknow, giving the following vivid account of the relief of that place :—

"I had gone out to try and make myself useful in company with Jessie Brown, the wife of a corporal in my husband's regiment. Poor Jessie had been in a state of restless excitement all through the siege, and had fallen away visibly within the last few days. A constant fever consumed her, and her mind wandered occasionally, especially that day, when the recollections of home seemed powerfully present with her. At last, overcome with fatigue, she lay down on the ground wrapped in her plaid. I sat beside her, promising to awaken her when, as she said, 'her father should return from the ploughing.' She fell at length into a profound slumber, motionless, and apparently breathless, her head resting in my lap. I myself could no longer resist the inclination to sleep, in spite of the continual roar of the cannon. Suddenly I was aroused by a wild, unearthly scream close to my ear: my companion stood upright before me, her arms raised, and her head bent forward in the attitude of listening. A look of intense delight broke over her countenance, she grasped my hand,

drew me towards her, and exclaimed, 'Dinna ye hear it? Dinna ye hear it? Ay, I'm no dreamin', it's the slogan o' the Highlanders! We're saved! We're saved!' Then flinging herself on her knees, she thanked God with passionate fervour. I felt utterly bewildered; my English ears heard only the roar of the artillery, and I thought my poor Jessie was still raving; but she darted to the batteries, and I heard her cry incessantly to the men, 'Courage! Courage! Hark to the slogan—to the Macgregor, the grandest o' them a'! Here's help at last!' To describe the effect of these words upon the soldiers would be impossible. For a moment they ceased firing, and every soul listened in intense anxiety. Gradually, however, there arose a murmur of disappointment, and the wailing of the women who had flocked to the spot burst out anew as the Colonel shook his head. Our dull Lowland ears heard nothing but the rattle of the musketry. A few moments more of this death-like suspense, of this agonising hope, and Jessie, who had again sunk on the ground, sprang to her feet, and cried in a voice so clear and piercing that it was heard along the whole line, 'Will ye no believe it noo? The slogan has ceased indeed, but the Campbells are comin'! D'ye hear? D'ye hear?' At that moment we seemed indeed to hear the voice of God in the distance, when the pibroch of the Highlanders

brought us tidings of deliverance, for now there was no longer any doubt of the fact."

The letter so impressed itself on Britten's imagination that he straightway wrote a lyric on the subject, and took it to Jefferys, the music-publisher, who wanted it altered, which the author refused to do. The latter thereupon sent the words to John Blockley, who immediately set them, and the song had a great vogue for many years. My authority for this story is the author's son, Mr. W. S. Britten, who has been for over forty years connected with the music-publishing house of John Blockley, now affiliated with that of Ascherberg, Hopwood, and Crew.

CHAPTER II

BISHOP AND "HOME, SWEET HOME"

THE name of Sir Henry Bishop is one that, in the minds of the people, will always be associated with "Home, Sweet Home." To musicians this statement may savour of absurdity, for Bishop was a composer of high ability, a brilliant conductor, and a holder of the musical chair at Oxford. But in a book of this kind, dealing with songs and ballads entirely from a "popular" standpoint, the fact that he was the composer of "Home, Sweet Home," a ballad that has taken a lasting place among the national songs of England, must be accorded a prominent place in our estimation of Bishop.

It is curious, and a little disappointing, to find that the author of these universally familiar words was not an Englishman but an American, John Howard Payne. The song appeared in the opera *Clari, the Maid of Milan*, and was first sung by Miss Maria Tree, who is said to have created quite a furore by her rendering of it. In the published music the tune is described as a

Sicilian air, but there can be no doubt but that it is Bishop's own. Mr. Fitzgerald in his book, before referred to, explains this by saying that Bishop was asked to edit a collection of national melodies, and having no Sicilian air, wrote "Home, Sweet Home," and dubbed it Sicilian. Whether this is so or not, it seems quite certain that Bishop was the composer.

The song, of which over 300,000 copies were said to have been sold in the first year alone, has always been a favourite item in the répertoire of many famous singers. Jenny Lind used to sing it frequently as an encore. Once, when singing in America, she was told that Payne was among the audience. The scene was the National Hall at Washington, and the *Philadelphia Record*, as quoted by Mr. Fitzgerald, in describing the occasion said: "When she had charmed the audience with her singing, she turned her face to where Payne was sitting and sang 'Home, Sweet Home,' at the close of which a whirlwind of excitement and enthusiasm swept through the vast audience."

This was in 1850, when Jenny Lind was engaged by Barnum to make a tour of the United States, where she remained for nearly two years. She was accompanied by Sir Julius (then Mr.) Benedict, and the tour is said to have realised a profit of £20,000, the whole of which

she afterwards devoted to founding and endowing art scholarships in Sweden, and to various charities in this country.

Of the wonderful career of the "Swedish Nightingale" there are stories and anecdotes galore. Though somewhat of a digression from the subject of "Home, Sweet Home," and of ballads generally, I cannot refrain from quoting the description of her first introduction to Manuel Garcia which appears in Holland and Rockstro's *Memoirs of Jenny Lind.*

"Mademoiselle Lind called on Manuel Garcia and formally requested the great teacher to receive her as a pupil. After making her sing through the usual scales and forming his own opinion of the power and compass of her organ, he asked her for the well-known scena from *Lucia di Lammermoor*—'Perchè non ho.' In this, unhappily, she broke down completely, in all probability through nervousness, for she had appeared in the part of Lucia at the Stockholm Theatre no less than thirty-nine times only the year before, and the music must therefore have been familiar to her. However, let the cause have been what it might, the failure was complete, and upon the strength of it the maestro pronounced his terrible verdict: 'It would be useless to teach you, mademoiselle; you have no voice left.'

"It is necessary that these words should be distinctly recorded, for their misquotation in the newspapers and elsewhere has led to a false impression, equally unjust to master and pupil. The exact words were: 'Vous n'avez plus de voix.' Jenny Lind had once possessed a voice, as Garcia realised perfectly clearly, but it had been so strained by over-exertion and a faulty method of emission that for the time being scarcely a shred of it remained."

Antoinette Sterling was another whose singing of "Home, Sweet Home" lingers gratefully in the memory of those who had the privilege of hearing her. She herself has related how in the days when she was singing at Henry Ward Beecher's church in America, one of the congregation, an old gentleman of seventy, once waited behind to speak to her after the service, and said that he had something which he thought would interest her. He then told her that he had been an intimate friend of John Howard Payne, the author of "Home, Sweet Home," from whom he had received the words of two extra verses, which had been added to the song later, and had never been published. He then handed her a copy of the verses, which ran as follows:—[1]

[1] See *Antoinette Sterling and other Celebrities.* M. Sterling Mackinlay.

THIRD VERSE

How sweet 'tis to sit 'neath a fond father's smile,
And the cares of a mother to soothe and beguile:
Let others delight 'mid new pleasures to roam:
But give me, oh, give me, the pleasures of Home.

Home—Home—sweet, sweet Home!
But give me—ah, give me, the pleasures of Home!

FOURTH VERSE

To thee I'll return overburdened with care—
The heart's dearest solace will smile on me there!
No more from that cottage again will I roam:
Be it ever so humble there's no place like Home!

Home—Home—sweet, sweet Home!
There's no place like Home,
There's no place like Home!

J. H. P.

It is rather interesting to note that "Home, Sweet Home" was the first song sung by Adelina Patti on her "discovery" by Colonel Mapleson. The latter had heard of an extraordinary young vocalist, hardly nineteen years of age, who had been charming America, and was very anxious to hear her for himself. He describes in his Memoirs their first meeting:—

"Some time in the month of April," he says, "the little lady from America arrived, and sent me up her card, bearing the name of Adelina Patti. She was accompanied by Maurice Strakosch, her brother-in-law. They wished to know when Mr. Smith's season was likely to begin. I could give them no information beyond the

current report which they had already heard themselves. The little lady, who was then seated on a sofa at the Arundel Hotel, at the bottom of Norfolk Street, Strand, suggested that I should try the speculation myself, as she felt sure she could draw money. I therefore asked her to let me hear her, that I might judge as to the quality of her voice, to which she responded by singing 'Home, Sweet Home.' I saw that I had secured a diamond of the first water."

Albani can probably lay claim to having sung "Home, Sweet Home" more times than any singer living, and that in every corner of the globe. One interesting occasion was the Jubilee concert at the Albert Hall, which was given in aid of the Home for Incurables, when a lady in the audience was so touched that she straightway wrote out a cheque for £1000 in favour of the Home.

Another incident that is fresh in the singer's mind happened at a concert that she gave at Denver, U.S.A., when it was only a small township of some thirty years' standing. The audience was almost entirely composed of immigrants, and as the last bars of the song died away they rose with one accord and united their voices in one mighty shout, mingled here and there with the loud sobbing of those whose thoughts of the home they had so lately left had proved too much for their pent-up feelings.

In Vienna, Munich, and Buda-Pesth the song was greeted with surprising enthusiasm, and found equal favour in such widely divergent corners of the globe as Australia, Vancouver, New York, South Africa, and India.

Albani relates how she met Lord Kitchener at a dinner at Government House, Calcutta. After dinner he asked her to sing. "What would you like me to sing?" she asked. Lord Kitchener considered a moment, and then said simply, "'Home, Sweet Home,' please." At the end of the song he said "Thank you" in his quiet way, and relapsed into silence.

But perhaps the most interesting of all Albani's experiences in connection with this song was the occasion when she visited the compound at the Kimberley diamond mines. The Zulu miners gave her a cordial reception, and after they had indulged in some native dances for her entertainment, one of them came up to her and said, "Lady, please sing!" A chair was brought, and there in the middle of the compound, with the Zulus squatting all round her, she sang a verse of the old familiar song. The Zulus applauded her in a dignified manner, and then walked solemnly away. A souvenir, in the shape of an uncut diamond, given her by the manager of the mines, serves the singer as a pleasant reminder of this somewhat unique experience.

[*Lafayette.*

MADAME ALBANI.

[*Elliott & Fry.*

MR. WILHELM GANZ.

(*See pages* 146–148)

If I have been drawn somewhat far afield in my digression on "Home, Sweet Home," the sentimental interest that attaches to this simple ballad must be my apology. Songs come and go, are written, sung, and forgotten, but "Home, Sweet Home" goes on for ever.

Next of Bishop's ballads to "Home, Sweet Home" in point of popularity is "My Pretty Jane," the words of which are by Edward Fitzball. This was first published under the title of "The bloom is on the rye." The story goes that Fitzball wrote the lyric when quite a young man, and found it some years afterwards in a drawer among a bundle of old papers. He sent it to Bishop, with whom he was then collaborating a great deal, and the latter set it, but thought so poorly of it that he threw it into the waste-paper basket, whence Fitzball luckily rescued it. Of its production in public and its immediate success the author has the following to say in his Reminiscences: "'My Pretty Jane,' inimitably sung by Robinson, made quite a furore; and was encored every night of the season. Bishop thought nothing of the melody; I do not believe he would have consented to its being sung but in a moment of necessity, when no other new song could be supplied for Robinson. . . . Of the words I felt there was nothing to boast; yet that melody and those words have never been lost

sight of by the public for twenty years. I was absolutely assured not long since that five hundred pounds had been refused for their undivided copyright." This was written in 1839; now, some seventy years later, it is almost equally true to say that the song has "never been lost sight of by the public."

It was, of course, one of Sims Reeves's favourite ballads. Says Fitzball: "Sims Reeves has taken up the air lately, and charmingly he sings it; but it ought to be sung in the open air, under the moonlit summer trees, as at Vauxhall." Plenty of people, however, would have been content to hear Sims Reeves sing it anywhere.

Ben Davies is perhaps the only singer who sings this song much to-day. He relates that a few years ago he received a letter from an old gentleman, quite unknown to him, saying that he attended every ballad concert at which the popular tenor was singing, in the one hope that he should hear him sing "My Pretty Jane." The letter closed with a pathetic appeal to have his longing realised.

The music of the song "Oh no, we never mention her," referred to in the last chapter, the words of which were by Haynes Bayly, has been attributed by some authorities to Alexander Lee, and by others to Sir Henry Bishop. It is curious that in the British Museum Music Catalogue the song is entered thus: "The poetry by

Thomas Haynes Bayly, the symphonies and accompaniments by Sir Henry Bishop," which looks as though the latter had made an arrangement of someone else's melody, possibly Lee's, but more probably Bayly's own, as he often composed the melodies to his songs without being able to harmonise them or write them down correctly. Lee wrote a song with Bayly entitled "Oh no, we never name her," which may have led to the confusion mentioned above. Other lyrics of Bayly's set by Lee were "The Soldier's Tear," and an "answer" to it, "The Soldier's Return," and a song called "The Rover's Bride."

The indefatigable Bayly also wrote, in collaboration with Bishop, "The Mistletoe Bough," "I have sent back every token," and "I'm saddest when I sing," a song whose title so tickled Artemus Ward, and is referred to in his famous "lecture," where he says: "I am saddest when I sing. So are the people who hear me. In fact they are generally sadder than I am!"

Of Bishop's other songs which are still being sung to-day are his settings of Shakespeare songs, the best known of which are "Should he upbraid?" "Bid me discourse," and "Lo, here the gentle lark," a great favourite of Melba's.

The following little pen picture of Bishop by the late Willett Beale, in his book *The Light of Other Days*, may fitly serve to close this chapter.

"Before we left Albion Street my mother took me to say farewell to Sir Henry Bishop, who lived in the same street. We found him writing at a small piano in his drawing-room. He showed me, although a mere child, the desk he had had made to fit the pianoforte. It covered the keys, and enabled him to compose, and write what he composed, without moving from the instrument.

"Sir Henry was a courtly gentleman, in figure and appearance not unlike the great Duke of Wellington. We had not seen him for some time, and my mother asked him why he had absented himself from our house. 'Neighbours,' he replied, 'resemble the notes of music; those in the closest proximity to each other should meet but seldom, in order to prevent their harmony being destroyed by discord.'"

A remark which, though it sounds more metaphorical than gallant, was evidently intended to be complimentary.

CHAPTER III

BENEDICT AND BALFE

SIR JULIUS BENEDICT, or as his friends, much to his amusement, once dubbed him, "Sir Jubilee Benefit," was, of course, a contemporary of Bishop's, and survived him for a good many years. Though not an Englishman by birth, England was the country of his adoption, and he is usually regarded as a British composer.

He was for many years conductor of the Monday Popular Concerts at St. James's Hall, and prior to that, as has already been mentioned, he accompanied Jenny Lind on her tour through the United States, directing the whole of the concerts given on the tour. His own annual concert was a feature of the London musical season for over forty years. Benedict had contracted a great friendship with Madame Malibran, the famous singer, and De Bériot, the violinist, whom Malibran afterwards married. In Beale's *Light of Other Days* there is an account of how these annual concerts came to be instituted, given in Benedict's own words.

"Malibran made me give my first annual concert. I hesitated to incur the risk it involved, but Malibran and her husband De Bériot said they would pay any loss that might accrue, and they announced the concert in my name. The tickets were numbered and sold by Malibran herself, and I was not allowed to discontinue my lessons to attend to any of the arrangements, all of which were carried out by my two kind friends. The concert proved a great success, and De Bériot gave me £40 as the result. After the season I went to Paris, where I remained a few weeks, and came to terms with Troupenas, the publisher, for the publication of my compositions. When taking leave of Troupenas, before my return to London, he handed me one hundred pounds sterling. It was the balance of the concert money! They thought that as a young man I might have squandered it had I received the whole amount in a lump sum."

As a slight digression, and I hope a pardonable one, it is interesting to note Benedict's personal opinion of Malibran as a singer. "Her voice," he says, "was of the most extraordinary compass, and of splendid quality throughout. She sang with wonderful dramatic fire and brilliancy. Nothing has ever exceeded the effect she produced in Balfe's *Maid of Artois*."

Of Benedict's songs many of the most popular

were contained in the various operas he composed. Such are "By the sad sea waves," from *The Brides of Venice;* "The Shipwrecked Heart," from *Graziella;* "The Cattle in the Clover" and "I've a home in cloudland," from *The Bride of Song;* "The Colleen Bawn" and "Eily Mavourneen," from *The Lily of Killarney;* and the still more famous duet "The moon has raised her lamp above," from the same opera.

One of the most popular songs Benedict ever wrote was "Rock me to sleep," which was brought out by Miss Edith Wynne, the singer, who made quite a sensation with it. It is said that this song was offered to Ashdown and Parry, the music publishers, but refused by them because Benedict did not possess the copyright of the words. It was eventually published by Duncan Davidson, in whose hands it proved an enormous financial success.

Others of Benedict's songs which were very popular in their day were "Halcyon Days," words by the Hon. Mrs. Norton; "The Maiden's Dream," "The Peace of Home," words by G. Linley; "The Rose of Erin," words by Claribel; "The Sailor's Bride," "The Skylark," words by Barry Cornwall. It is somewhat of a revelation to find the name of F. E. Weatherly as a writer of the words of one of Benedict's songs entitled "Face it!" (begin-

ning "Comrade, is the world awry?") as showing the number of years that graceful writer has been before the public.

It may be noted in passing that Willett Beale, the author of a book of musical reminiscences, *The Light of Other Days*, and a friend of Benedict's and Balfe's, was son of Frederick Beale, principal partner in the firm of Cramer, Beale, and Co., music publishers. The son afterwards entered the same firm. He wrote a number of songs under the name of Walter Maynard, and, in this connection, he tells a story of a certain composer who used to whistle a tune to him, and get Maynard to write it down and put it into shape, adding the proper harmonies and accompaniments. The song when completed was always claimed by the whistler as his own. On one occasion, on hearing the result, he said, "By Jove, I think it's the best thing I've done, don't you?" Whereupon he signed the manuscript with a flourish and took it off straightway to a music publisher.

Beale was, as I have said, a friend of both Benedict and Balfe. Two little anecdotes of the latter which he gives are worth quoting. The first describes Balfe as his intimate friends knew him in his younger days.

"Balfe had become one of our liveliest companions in Albion Street. A blue-eyed, hand-

some little fellow, the very embodiment of sunny smiles and laughter, he was the merriest playmate we children had yet known. We adored him. He romped with us, told us fairy tales, sang comic songs to us, until we were completely fascinated by his exuberant good humour and inexhaustible fun. . . . Our neighbours the Powers and the Bishops have come in, and we are all laughing until tears run down our cheeks at Mr. Balfe's singing 'Our little pigs lie on very good straw—aw-aw, hee-haw.' He imitates the pigs grunting to perfection. . . . He has children of his own, and his wife, a very handsome woman, can hardly speak a word of English. She insists upon calling him her 'horse-pond,' instead of her husband."

On another occasion Balfe brought Thomas Moore, the poet, with him to the house, and Beale describes his introduction to the latter. "They tried some music Balfe had composed to Moore's words, which they wished my father to hear. Balfe told me never to forget I had had the honour of speaking to Ireland's greatest poet. Thomas Moore shook hands with me, saying his compatriot Balfe had kissed the Blarney Stone—a piece of information I could not be expected to understand at the time."

Balfe's earliest ballad was composed at the age of ten. This was a song entitled "Young

Fanny," to which Haynes Bayly afterwards wrote new words and renamed it "The Lover's Mistake," in which form it was sung by Madame Vestris in the comedy of *Paul Pry*. Some years later, when studying composition under Charles Horn, the composer of "Cherry Ripe," Balfe relates how he turned into the theatre to hear Madame Vestris sing his master's famous composition, which she did, and then to his surprise followed it up with his own "Young Fanny." Overcome with excitement, he turned to the people near him and said, "I wrote that song"; but seeing the incredulous smiles on the faces around him, he felt suddenly overcome with confusion, and turned and left the theatre. He was about sixteen at the time.

His first opera, *The Siege of Rochelle*, was produced in 1835, and proved signally successful. One song, "The Cottage near Rochelle," became a great favourite. But it was his next opera, *The Maid of Artois*, in which Malibran scored such a triumph, that contained one of the most popular songs he ever wrote, and, according to one of his biographers, "perhaps the most popular song in England that our days have known"—"The Light of Other Days."

This song was created by Henry Phillips, the famous baritone, himself a composer in a small way. At one of the rehearsals of *The Maid of*

MR. HENRY BIRD. [*William Whiteley.*

SIR CHARLES SANTLEY. [*Elliott & Fry.*

Artois, Bunn, the author of the opera, and manager of Drury Lane Theatre, expressed an opinion that the song was superfluous, and had better come out. Whereupon Henry Phillips declared that if he wasn't allowed to sing it he would promptly throw up his part, and after a good deal of heated discussion it was decided to retain it. The song met with a tremendous reception.

It was prefaced by a cornet symphony which was somewhat of a novelty, and no doubt helped to catch the public ear. Phillips was a fine singer with a magnificent voice.

Henry Bird, the veteran accompanist, tells me he remembers accompanying Phillips in 1851, in which year the latter was one of the vocalists at the annual concert given by Bird's father, when organist of Walthamstow. Bird had himself assisted at the concerts, either as accompanist or soloist, from the time that he was eighteen years of age. "I well remember," he says, in speaking of the occasion, "going to Henry Phillips's house to rehearse. I have a memento of this visit in the shape of a composition of his, on which he wrote :—

TO

MASTER HENRY RICHARD BIRD,

WITH THE BEST WISHES AND COMPLIMENTS OF THE COMPOSER.

HENRY PHILLIPS,

35 HART STREET, BLOOMSBURY." *20th Feb.*, 1851.

To return to "The Light of Other Days." Mrs. Byrne in her amusing *Gossip of the Century* relates how, at an entertainment at Holford House, just as the singer was about to begin this song, the gas went out, and the cry was for the "light of other days," i.e. tallow and composite candles. She also records the fact that Balfe used to sing his own songs in drawing-rooms, and adds: "He found it a profitable business; his terms were high, and he had a trick of disappearing as soon as he considered he had done enough for the money." The remark has a spice of malice about it, and is hardly in accordance with what is known of Balfe's open-handed disposition.

Balfe and the pianist Sigismund Thalberg were great friends, and the two were always playing practical jokes on one another. Once, however, Thalberg nearly offended Balfe for life. The latter was singing "The Light of Other Days," in which he greatly fancied himself, when at a moment of deepest pathos Thalberg crept up behind him and popped a lump of sugar into his mouth. Balfe's Irish temper was up in a moment and there threatened to be a serious breach, but luckily his sense of humour saved the situation.

This new fashion of a cornet accompaniment, mentioned above, was later introduced again in

the case of "When other lips" ("Then you'll remember me"), another of Balfe's immensely popular songs. Says John Hullah a little unkindly, writing of "When other lips": "The town fairly went mad about it. Balfe's graceful but somewhat commonplace melody was exalted to the skies, and the brows of Mr. Bunn, the author of the words, might have ached under the laurels that were heaped upon them." The cornet he refers to as a "cheap and nasty trumpet."

This song was created by William Harrison, the tenor, who was the original Thaddæus in *The Bohemian Girl*. "I well recollect," says Beale, "although a mere boy at the time, the prodigious uproar occasioned by his singing 'Then you'll remember me,' on the first night of the opera. The majority of the audience insisted upon hearing the song a second time. To this there were numerous opponents, and the noise made by the rival factions was deafening. Balfe laid down the baton and folded his arms, the singer on the stage made signs of compliance which were unheeded in the tumult; some minutes elapsed, after which the dissentients gave way, and the song, destined to become a national melody, was sung again."

Harrison was an extremely popular singer.

There is a story told of him, for which Beale is again my authority, which is a good illustration of the craze for popular stage favourites which some people, and members of the fair sex especially, are so apt to acquire. It appears that when *The Bohemian Girl* was produced at Drury Lane a noble marchioness fell in love, or imagined she did, with Harrison, and began sending him all sorts of costly presents. These were sometimes left at the stage-door of the theatre, and sometimes at his private house. At first they were sent anonymously, but as soon as Harrison discovered who the sender was he returned them. The fair donor persisted in her gifts for some time, but eventually gave it up as hopeless.

However, she did not even then leave Harrison alone. Having rented a box at Drury Lane, she had access to the theatre at any time, and when *The Bondman* was about to be produced she began assiduously attending rehearsals. Harrison got so anoyed at last by this persecution, that he refused to continue rehearsing while the lady was in the theatre. Bunn, the manager, at length got over the difficulty by having a curtain drawn across the box during the daytime, and so fixed it that it could not be undone from the inside. Even then the infatuated lady continued to come and sit behind the curtain, content to

hear, if she could not see, the object of her adoration !

It is interesting to note that of Harrison's two sons who survived him, one was the Vicar of Clovelly, in Devonshire, who married a daughter of Charles Kingsley, and the other was Clifford Harrison, the reciter.

A singer who was associated with Harrison in many of Balfe's operas was Louisa Pyne, who was the possessor of a soprano voice of beautiful quality, and wonderful compass and flexibility. "I love to write for Louisa Pyne," said Balfe once, "her voice is amazingly sympathetic to me ; she listens attentively to all my suggestions, and I can rely upon her carrying them out exactly as I wish."

"I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls" was, of course, another famous number out of *The Bohemian Girl.* The publishing rights of this opera were offered by Balfe to Addison, a partner in the firm of Cramer, Beale, and Co. Addison, however, refused to pay the advance of £100 which the composer demanded, and the latter therefore took it to Chappell.

Among other songs of Balfe's which attained to great popularity were "In this old chair," so often sung by Sims Reeves; "Good-night, beloved"; "The Arrow and the Song"; "The Power of Love," from the opera *Satanella ;*

"The Merry Zingara," and, of course, "Come into the garden, Maud" and "Killarney."

"Come into the garden, Maud" will always be inseparably associated with the name of Sims Reeves; it was written specially for him, and it ranks as one of his most successful songs. Balfe got the inspiration for it while staying in Paris, and immediately sent off the opening bars of the melody to Reeves. A few days afterwards they came back with the laconic inscription "This will do.—S. R."

It was sung by Joseph Maas at the Paris Exhibition of 1879, which was visited by the late King Edward when Prince of Wales, and was almost as popular in Paris as in London.

With regard to "Killarney," A. H. Behrend, Balfe's grandson, told me the following story, which is well worth repeating. It appears that Boucicault wanted a song for his play and brought the words of "Killarney" to Balfe. Mrs. Balfe took them upstairs to her husband, who straightway sat down to the piano. Hardly had she left the room when her husband called her back, saying excitedly, "I have done the song; it is great. Tell Boucicault to come and hear it!" But Mrs. Balfe, who, like John Gilpin's wife, "had a frugal mind," pointed out that if it were known how quickly he had composed the song he would never get anything

for it. And so, after some discussion, she returned to Boucicault and said, "Balfe has an idea! If you call to-morrow or the next day he will have the song ready for you." Whether her strategy resulted to Balfe's financial advantage is not recorded, but it may be presumed that it did.

The librettos of many of Balfe's operas were written by Edward Fitzball, who, as already mentioned, was also closely associated with Bishop in his operatic work. Fitzball was a great admirer of Balfe's. "There is nothing Balfe could not do," he declared once. "I have heard it said that when he was directing some composition of his own abroad, the tenor on the stage asserted that he (Balfe) had composed an impossible note, at which the composer stoutly asserted that he could sing it himself, and leaping like a greyhound out of the orchestra on to the stage, he sang the note with the greatest ease and felicity, at which the distracted tenor, tearing off his hair" (a wig, perhaps!), "rushed out of the theatre."

The two men were great friends. Fitzball was once the means of patching up what might have been a serious quarrel between Balfe and his family. What the cause of the quarrel was is unknown, but Balfe had left the house highly indignant, and though said to be entirely in

the wrong, persisted in rejecting all pacific overtures, and refused to return. Eventually Fitzball called to see him, and without making any reference to the unfortunate affair, laid before him a lyric which he had just written, entitled "We never see him now." On reading the words Balfe burst into floods of tears and straightway hurried home to ask his wife's pardon. He afterwards set the song, which became very popular, and was often sung in public by Mrs. Balfe.

"The gentle Fitzball," as he was often called, was a great sentimentalist. One of his friends once said of him after his death, "The sentimentality of dear old Fitzball was really very amusing. As a poet he felt every word he wrote, and would shed tears over the creations of his fancy. He believed every woman to be in love with him. And yet his personal attractions cannot be said to have been irresistible. He was tall and slim in figure. He had a long face, his nose was large, and of a broad ungainly shape. He had small twinkling hazel eyes, and spoke in a guttural tone of voice which sounded very like an impediment of speech."

This last infirmity was also a characteristic of Vincent Wallace, with whom Fitzball collaborated in *Maritana*. Wallace was just the

opposite of Balfe, slow and heavy-looking, and very deliberate in his movements, whereas Balfe was all fire and energy. Wallace was brought to Fitzball by Heyward St. Leger, who introduced him as "an Irishman, a compatriot of Balfe's, who wants a libretto." Fitzball was at that moment putting the finishing touches to *Maritana*, and after hearing Wallace play some of his own music handed him the book without hesitation. Some of the songs in *Maritana* have almost rivalled Balfe's in popularity, notably "Alas, those chimes, so sweetly stealing," "There is a flower that bloometh," "'Tis the harp in the air," "In happy moments," and "Yes, let me like a soldier fall."

The popularity of Balfe's songs is due in large measure to his wonderful gift for easy and flowing melody, a quality that was noticeable even in his "Young Fanny," or "The Lover's Mistake," composed when a boy. "There has hardly been a great singer in Europe," says Mr. Chorley in his *Musical Recollections* (1862), "since the year 1834, for whom Balfe has not been called upon to write; hardly a great and successful theatre in which his works have not been heard. He has the gift—now rare in late days — of melody; his tunes are in our streets."

Balfe has been accused of a want of conscientiousness, and of being contented with the

first idea that came along without troubling to elaborate it. But, on the other hand, it may fairly be urged that it is just the element of spontaneousness in his music which has been the secret of its irresistible appeal to the hearts of the million.

CHAPTER IV

STERNDALE BENNETT, HULLAH, AND HATTON

AS a complete contrast to the songs of Benedict and Balfe, the latter more particularly, the songs of Sir William Sterndale Bennett, though forming only a very small proportion of his musical compositions, may fitly be considered here, before passing on to the popular ballads which were in vogue some fifty years ago.

Bennett is described by the writer in *Grove* as "the only English musical composer since Purcell who has attained a distinct style and individuality of his own"; while of his songs he says: "They are small compositions of almost Greek elegance and finish, both in the melodious and expressive character of the voice part, and the delicate suggestiveness of the accompaniments."

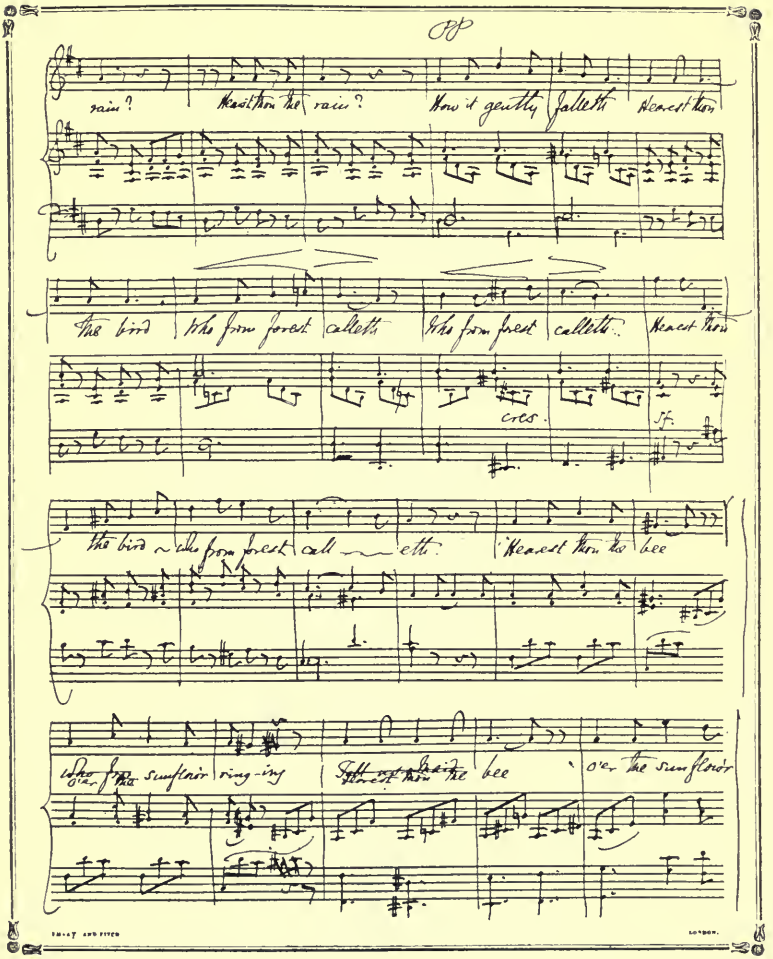
Some of them were immensely popular, notably "Gentle Zephyr," the first of his published songs. This was afterwards included in his first set of six songs, published in 1842, among

the others in the set being "Maydew," "Forget-me-not," and "To Chloe in sickness" (words by Robert Burns), which one musical critic of the time described as "a love song which would melt a heart of stone!"

In Bennett's Journal under the date of February 22nd in this year, (1842), is the following entry of rather personal interest:[1] "To-day I have been dining with Mendelssohn, and played him my songs." Between Mendelssohn and Bennett there was a long and close friendship, and the latter was a frequent and brilliant exponent of the master's works on the piano.

Apropos of this an amusing little incident is recorded in Bennett's *Life*. After Mendelssohn's death John Hullah gave a memorial concert in Exeter Hall, and Bennett had promised to play a selection of the *Lieder*. On a bench behind that occupied by Mrs. Bennett and her friends sat a burly countryman, whose enthusiasm for the vocal music was unrestrained, and whose comments were made in a stentorian voice *pro bono publico*. When Bennett's turn came, this loquacious gentleman let everyone know that he had not come there to see "a feller twiddling his fingers on the piano." Mrs. Bennett's party were, of course, anxious as to what might happen next. However, the gentleman in

[1] See *Life of Sterndale Bennett*, by J. R. Sterndale Bennett.



FACSIMILE PAGE OF ORIGINAL MS. OF STERNDALE BENNETT'S "SING, MAIDEN, SING."

question, in spite of his expressed preference for vocal music, apparently found Bennett's playing to his liking, for his complaints gradually ceased, and at the end he joined in the applause more heartily than anybody.

A second set of five songs was published in 1855. In this were included "Indian love," words by Barry Cornwall, "As lonesome through the woods," and "Sing, maiden, sing." Other separate songs of his which enjoyed considerable popularity were "Stay, my charmer," "Dancing lightly came the summer," and "Maiden mine." The latter was originally written in 1861, lost, and the music rewritten in 1866, the present words being adapted later. These were written by his son-in-law Thomas Case, as also were those of "Dancing lightly," and these two songs were sung at the Monday "Pops" by Henry Guy in February, 1874, just a year before Bennett's death.

For the first set of songs Bennett apparently got nothing in the way of monetary return, as his first publisher, Coventry, failed before he had paid the composer the balance owing him on fifteen out of twenty-eight works which the publisher had purchased, and Bennett was obliged to assign the songs to the new publishers who bought Coventry's business. "Long afterwards," says his biographer, "he said in a

regretful tone, 'Ah, I was obliged to give those away; they ought really to be mine.'" His second set of songs realised £47—not a princely sum!

Bennett composed very little, or at least published very little of what he composed. Of songs he said once that what with finding words with which he thought he could deal, and then finding appropriate music which had at the same time some independent interest of its own, song-writing had been to him more difficult than any other form of composition. London was his favourite place for work. "In the country," he once said, "composition generally ends in taking a walk."

Of the composer's meeting with Tennyson, with whom he was brought into contact over the composition of the Inauguration Ode, his biographer gives an interesting account; and relates how, when Bennett spoke of the fear of public criticism sitting at his elbow when he tried to compose, Tennyson assured him that he himself knew the feeling only too well. But even more interesting from the point of view of actual song-writing is a letter from Charles Kingsley, with whom Bennett also composed an ode, the occasion in this instance being the installation of the Duke of Devonshire as Chancellor of Cambridge University. "I believe

it better," writes Kingsley, "to find the music first and set the words to them, as dear Tom Moore did, and that I should like to have done. But as you can understand my words, and I cannot understand your music, I fear that I must write, and you must set to music afterwards."

After saying that he would be perfectly willing, should any alteration be required, to do what he was told, "which most poets are not," he goes on: "Mind you, I am not a poet; and therefore I do not demand absolute right, as poets do nowadays. If you choose to enter into partnership with me, I can give the firm an ear practised in all sorts of metres and in the meaning thereof—having made *time* a study, which I have often hoped to reduce to a science. I can give the power of finding a sonorous word or vowel whenever you want one, and I hope sense worthy of us and our audience." All of which may be said, perhaps, to express the art of lyric-writing to a nicety.

Of the many musical people with whom Bennett contracted a warm friendship during his busy life, none was a greater admirer of his than Jenny Lind. A rather pathetic little souvenir of this friendship was found among her papers after her death. This was the stump of a pencil, wrapped in paper, on which was written in Swedish: "Dr.

Bennett's pencil, which he used when at work on *The Chorale Book*."

One of Bennett's pupils at the Academy was Arthur Sullivan. In the latter's memoirs, edited by Arthur Lawrence, he pays a nice little tribute to Sterndale Bennett. "I remember," he says, "how we would wait there [the Royal Academy of Music] for Sterndale Bennett from five o'clock till seven in the evening, until the message would come to ask me to kindly go up to his house in Russell Place, and then, although he was weary from teaching all day, he would give us some interesting lessons, telling us his experiences of intercourse with various great composers. His wife was a most charming woman, and when I was there late would make me stay to supper with them. I must say that I enjoyed those evenings immensely. There was something very instructive and fascinating about Bennett's personality."

But I fear I am straying from the strait and narrow path again. My business is with ballads, and the next composer to come under notice is a contemporary of Bennett's, John Hullah.

The mention of Hullah brings us back straight away to Charles Kingsley. "The Three Fishers" is a song which will probably never lose its popularity, and is the one by which Hullah will

always be best remembered as a song-writer. It was a tremendous favourite with Antoinette Sterling, and was also sung a great deal by Madame Sainton-Dolby, though it is interesting to note that each singer gave the song a totally different rendering. Antoinette Sterling once referred to this, when she said:[1] "Although I had never been to sea in a storm, and had never even seen fishermen, I somehow understood that song of 'The Three Fishers' by instinct. On reading the poem over for the first time no one could know from the opening that the men would necessarily be drowned. Therefore it was a story. But there is a natural tendency to anticipate an unhappy ending; hence it was customary to begin the song so mournfully that everybody realised from the very start what the end was going to be. Madame Sainton-Dolby, for instance, used to sing it sorrowfully from the first note to the last. I had never seen or known of anyone who was drowned, but that mysterious instinct was so strong that I could not foreshadow the finish. When, therefore, I started, I always made the first verse quite bright. I must believe it was the true way, since both the poet and composer endorsed my rendering of it."

"The Three Fishers" was sung by Antoinette Sterling at her début in London, which was made

[1] *Antoinette Sterling and Other Celebrities.* M. S. Mackinlay.

at Jules Rivière's Promenade Concerts under the conductorship of Sir Julius Benedict. She opened with the "Slumber Song" from Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*, which had a great reception; but on the conclusion of her second song, Hullah's "Three Fishers," there was a tumult of applause; people rose in their places and cheered, waving hats and handkerchiefs in their excitement.

Hullah's setting of Adelaide Anne Procter's "The Storm" was also a popular song in its day; as also was his "O that we two were maying," and a song from Kingsley's *Water Babies*, "I once had a dear little doll, dears."

As a teacher of singing, and as a lecturer and writer on music Hullah attained to a high position. For many years he gave concerts with his pupils in Exeter Hall, among which "four historical concerts illustrating in chronological order the rise and progress of English vocal music" were especially noteworthy.

Contemporary with Hullah was John Liptrot Hatton, composer of perhaps the finest love ballad in the English language, Herrick's "To Anthea." This song was first published in 1850, in a volume of settings of Herrick's poems, composed, as Hatton himself says in the preface, "at different times under various circumstances." The preface continues: "Some few of them were

composed previous to my departure to America in the autumn of the year 1848, and presented as little souvenirs to several of my friends on my leaving England. . . . On my return to England I was urged by one of my friends to make a complete collection of these little compositions and publish them in a consolidated form. The kindness of my friends in restoring me some of my MSS. has enabled me to do this, and I now send these songs forth into the world, satisfied if they should be the means, in however humble a degree, of adding to the material of musical enjoyment, or of contributing anything to the regeneration of the popular taste in an important department of chamber music."

Sir Charles Santley has made "To Anthea" essentially his own, and it will probably always be associated with his name. A so-called special "Santley" setting was published by Cramer's in 1881.

The late Mr. F. G. Edwards, writing in the *Musical Times* last year, said of Hatton: "As a creative musician Hatton's fame rests on his part-songs and 'To Anthea.' A genuine British production, 'To Anthea' takes high rank among the first six of all the songs composed by our countrymen, and in spite of its sixty years it remains as fresh as ever in its irresistible vigour and perfect expression."

"Good-bye, Sweetheart, Good-bye," though not to be compared with "To Anthea," was another of Hatton's songs that enjoyed a very considerable popularity. It was introduced to the public by no less a star than Mario. A story used to be told of Hatton to the effect that once at Margate he strolled into the ante-room of the Assembly Rooms, where a concert was going on, with a brown-paper parcel containing a pair of boots he had just bought under his arm. One of the artists was down to sing "Good-bye, Sweetheart, Good-bye," and asked Hatton whether he would like to accompany him. The latter assented, and when the singer's turn arrived, absent-mindedly followed him on to the platform with the parcel of boots still under his arm, his appearance being greeted with shouts of laughter from the audience. Quite undismayed, Hatton deposited the parcel on the top of the piano, unconcernedly retiring with it under his arm when the song was over.

A song of a different type, though quite as popular in its way, was that jovial old ditty "Simon the Cellarer," which was also a favourite with Santley at one time. Mr. Edwards, in the article before referred to, recalled how once when Santley was singing the song at one of the ballad concerts, Hatton, who was accompanying, be-

came so excited that he suddenly joined in at the end of the song.

The words, excellent of their kind, were written by W. H. Bellamy, who was responsible for a great many of the lyrics of songs that were popular at this time, notably "The Lady of the Lea," by Henry Smart. It has been said that Hatton sold the entire copyright of "Simon the Cellarer" to a Mr. Thomas Oliphant for a £10 note!

This is the same gentleman for whom Hatton wrote a set of six songs with German and English words (the English version by Mr. Oliphant) under the pseudonym of P. B. Czapek, Czapek being the Hungarian for "hat on." On the songs is printed the inscription "These songs were composed expressly by order of Mr. Oliphant, and are his exclusive property," the latter possibly in consideration of another generous £10 note!

"The Enchantress," which was specially composed for Madame Viardot Garcia, was another popular ballad. Of Hatton's other songs the following may just be mentioned: "Ask me no more," "The Bells of Shandon," "Jack o' Lantern," and three settings of Longfellow—"The Old Clock on the Stairs," "The Reaper and the Flower," and "The Wreck of the Hesperus." Hatton also composed a setting to "The Sands

of Dee," as did Hullah, by the way, but the only setting remembered to-day is the one by Frederic Clay.

Hatton was one of the early exponents of the art of "songs at the piano," and was a very popular entertainer in this line. His versatility was amazing. In this connection may be quoted a paragraph which appeared in the *Musical World* for December 26, 1846, which is also mentioned by Mr. Edwards in his article. It runs as follows :—

"Mr. J. L. Hatton gave a musical entertainment at the Assembly Room, Rosemary Branch, Peckham, on Wednesday evening. Mr. J. L. Hatton was the Atlas of the entertainment, and bore the weight of the concert on his own shoulders. He lectured, sang, and performed on the pianoforte. Like Malaprop's Cerberus, he was three gentlemen at once. The entertainment was novel and interesting. Mr. Hatton gave some capital specimens of pianoforte music by various masters, including Corelli, Bach, Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, etc. He sang songs comic, sentimental, and serious. He levied contributions upon many nations for their compositions, and kept his audience alternately moved with delight and excited with laughter. Mr. Hatton was modest enough not to obtrude too many of his own works upon his visitors.

JACK HATTON.
(A caricature sketch by Charles Lyall.)

'The Adventures of Robinson Crusoe,' a song intended, no doubt, to be very comic, was the only composition of Mr. Hatton's performed during the evening."

A favourite song of his at the piano, and one that used to provoke the utmost hilarity, was "The Little Fat Man," which was generally supposed to be a skit on himself.

In appearance Hatton was not unlike an old Jack Tar, a peculiarity that is well brought out in Mr. Charles Lyall's well-known caricature. Sims Reeves always used to call him "The Sultan"; but the happiest description of all is that of a young lady who once remarked that his head was "like a boiled egg with a fringe round it!"

In the early days of his career Hatton wrote a good deal of instrumental music, but in this he was apparently not very successful, though he once had the honour of being compared to Mendelssohn, as is evident from a letter written by Thomas Attwood to Mendelssohn on February 9, 1835, and quoted in the *Musical Times*, in which he says :—

"We have recently had a new establishment here, which is called the 'Society of British Musicians,' in the hope of bringing forward native talent. I hardly need add that Sterndale Bennett stands pre-eminent. I, however, wish

you would look at your cloak, or great-coat, lest you should have had a bit cut out of it; for there is a young man of the name of Hatton, who seems to have got a little bit of it, indeed he seems to assimilate to your style without plagiary more than anyone I have met with."

But, as already quoted, Hatton's fame as a creative musician rests on his part-songs and "To Anthea." And for us the latter must suffice.

CHAPTER V

THE SONGS OF HENRY RUSSELL

THE songs of Henry Russell mark something of a new departure in ballad-writing, and may be said to have introduced the taste for the "descriptive" ballad, so much in vogue at one time. The sentiment of many of them is simple almost to pathos, but it caught the public fancy of that period, helped by the undoubted catchiness of the tunes. The words of many of them were written by Charles Mackay, a prolific writer of verse, to whom I refer later.

Henry Russell was born at Sheerness in 1812, and lived for many years of his life in America. It was there that he wrote the first ballad that was to bring him fame, though not fortune, seeing that he sold the copyright outright for a couple of dollars! This was the once famous, though now almost forgotten, "Woodman, spare that tree," the words of which were by George Morris, the American poet. Henry Russell has himself told the story of the circumstances under which the song came to be written.

"I was driving," he says, "in the vicinity of

New York with George Morris, the poet. We turned into Bloomfield Road, then a woodland lane of great natural beauty, to view at Morris's request a stately old tree which had been planted by the poet's grandfather. I well remember the ring of genuine pathos in Morris's voice as he told me on our way towards the tree of the tender recollections associated with the old homestead to which it was contiguous. His happy boyhood in his old home, surrounded by father, mother, and sisters—all came back to him at the mention of that old tree. Little did we dream of the drama that was to follow.

"As we neared the homely cottage which had once housed the Morris family, my friend noticed an old man with his coat off, sharpening an axe.

"'What are you going to do?' asked the poet, with a tremor of apprehension in his tone. 'You surely do not intend to cut down that tree?'

"'Yes, sirree,' was the blunt reply of the old man, who was evidently the occupant of one of the cottages.

"Morris and I descended from our trap to hold a parley with the old fellow. In conversation it transpired that the old man did not fancy having the tree so near his house. Besides, he wanted it for firewood. We asked him how much the wood would be worth, and he replied, 'About ten dollars.' So a bargain was speedily made,

the money was paid to him, and the daughter of the woodman pledged her word that the tree should stand as long as she lived.

"This incident made a deep impression on me, and I suggested it to Morris as a fine subject for poetic treatment. He took the hint and wrote the now well-known poem :—

Oh, woodman, spare that tree,
Touch not a single bough!
In youth it sheltered me,
And I'll protect it now—

which I immediately set to music."

The song caught on with startling rapidity in America, and afterwards in England, becoming immensely popular. But if Russell's assertion that he sold the song for a couple of dollars is correct, he was considerably out of pocket over the transaction!

As an instance of how this song impressed people who heard it, Russell relates an occasion when he was singing it in the North of England. At the close a gentleman in the audience got up and said excitedly, "Was the tree spared, sir?" "It was," said Russell. "Thank God for that!" the other answered with a sigh of heartfelt relief as he sat down again.

"Woodman, spare that tree" was followed by "A life on the ocean wave," which also enjoyed a good deal of popularity. The words were

written by Epps Sargent, and the story goes that he showed them to Morris, who said they would never do for setting to music. Happening to meet Russell in the street, Sargent told him what Morris had said. "Let's have a look at them," said Russell. Sargent produced them rather unwillingly. Russell read them, and saying, "This will do! Come along!" led the way into the back room of a Broadway music-store, where he promptly sat down to the piano and wrote the tune straight away.

"Henry Russell," said a writer once, "believed in songs that had a purpose, and many were the missions which he had set himself to initiate or participate in from the platform." To this category belong "The Maniac," which was written to expose the evils of private lunatic asylums, "The Gambler's Wife," and "The Slave Ship." Of "The Maniac" there is an amusing little anecdote. It was to be sung by a famous Italian opera basso at a benefit concert given by Henry Russell. When, however, the singer was trying it over at rehearsal, the opening line of the song, "Hush! 'tis the night watch," came out something like this: "Hosh! 'tis the night vash," which produced roars of laughter from everyone in the theatre. Needless to say, Russell got him to substitute another song.

"To the West!" was another well-known song of Henry Russell's, but the two most popular of all his songs were "There's a good time coming, boys" and "Cheer, boys, cheer!" Once when he was singing "There's a good time coming, boys" at a concert in aid of the potters at Hanley, Staffs, a man in the gallery rose and shouted, "Muster Russell, can you fix the toime?"—a question rather upsetting to the singer's gravity. It is said that over 400,000 copies of this song have been sold.

It had a tremendous vogue, so much so that it was even pressed into service as a hymn, and was actually used, with the alteration of the word "boys" into "yet," in George Dawson's Chapel in Birmingham, where every Sunday the following words were bawled out lustily by the congregation :—

> There's a good time coming yet,
> A good time coming ;
> We may not live to see the day,
> But earth shall glisten in the ray
> Of the good time coming.

"Cheer, boys, cheer" was even more popular still. It was once spoken of by a writer in the *Daily Telegraph* as an "anthem of optimism," and the description will serve well enough. It is said to have been sung by the soldiers when embarking for the Crimea, when the effect of

those hundreds of stentorian voices slinging out the rousing refrain as they left their native shore, some of them for the last time, can be better imagined than described.

Cheer, boys, cheer, no more of idle sorrow,
Courage! true hearts shall bear us on our way:
Hope points before, and shows the bright to-morrow,
Let us forget the darkness of to-day.

The song held the town for two years, when it was superseded in popularity, according to a contemporary writer, by, of all things, "Pop goes the weasel!"

The words of both these songs, as well of "To the West," were by Mackay. Another lyric of his, "The Ship on Fire," was also set by Henry Russell. This is a song of the truly "descriptive" type, similar in style to another song of Russell's, "Man the Lifeboat." "The Ship on Fire" once proved a little too realistic for some of its audience. The occasion was in a drawing-room where Russell was entertaining the guests by singing some of his own songs. All went well until he unfortunately started "The Ship on Fire." Amongst the audience were three ladies, the Misses Power, whose father had a little while before been lost on a ship, the *President*, which disappeared on its return journey from America and was never heard of again. As Russell proceeded with his song the

young ladies in question became more and more distressed, until at last they could contain themselves no longer, but burst out into loud sobs, bringing the song to an untimely conclusion.

Other songs of Henry Russell's which deserve a passing mention are his setting of Eliza Cook's "The Old Arm-chair," first published under the title of "The Favourite Chair," a song quite in accordance with the style of sentiment then in vogue, and "The Ivy Green," the words of which were by Charles Dickens.

In those days such a thing as a royalty was hardly known, and Russell sold all his songs outright. "Woodman, spare that tree" brought him a couple of dollars, as we have seen, and though that constituted a record in prices, it was run very close by "The Ivy Green," which fetched ten shillings! Russell's other songs fared very little better, as the following list will show:—

"Cheer, boys, cheer" . . .	£3
"There's a good time coming" .	2
"The Ship on Fire" . . .	1
"The Maniac" . . .	1
"The Gambler's Wife" . . .	1
"The Slave Ship"	1

But if Henry Russell received very little return from the sale of his songs, he made a good deal of money by his singing of them. When on

October 12, 1891, the late Sir Augustus Harris gave a Henry Russell night at Covent Garden, the *Daily Telegraph* in giving an account of the affair remarked: "Strangely enough, it was not the sale of his hundreds of copyrights which brought solid fortune to Henry Russell. He parted with his songs, indeed, for a mere nothing. It was to hear him sing them himself that the people of England and America thronged theatre and hall. Charles Mathews, the actor, who let the Lyceum Theatre, was wont to stand amazed at the genial composer's ability to fill the house nightly with enthusiastic audiences."

At the time of this concert, Henry Russell was in his eightieth year, and had not made any public appearance for thirty years. I have dealt with his songs at some length for the reason that, whatever opinions may be held as to their merits, they mark, as I have said, a distinct epoch in the history of the popular ballad, and undoubtedly paved the way for the long succession of "descriptive" songs which have enjoyed a considerable vogue since his day, though at the present time they have gone out of fashion, perhaps never to return.

As a writer of innumerable lyrics for songs, and for many years associated with Henry Russell in his work, Charles Mackay must have a brief mention here. As has already been seen,

he wrote the words of "To the West," "There's a good time coming," and "Cheer, boys, cheer"; and he was the author of a number of other popular songs by different composers.

Mackay was both poet and journalist. In 1852 he became editor of the *Illustrated London News*, in which paper he started an issue of musical supplements, each containing an original song written by himself to an old English melody, specially arranged by Sir Henry Bishop. The series was continued up to the time of Bishop's death. Mackay edited *A Thousand and One Gems of English Poetry*, which was illustrated by Millais and other famous artists. He died in 1889, and is known to the present generation as the author of "There's a land, a dear land," set to music by Frances Allitsen.

CHAPTER VI

THE BALLAD FIFTY YEARS AGO

IN this chapter I propose taking a general view of the ballads that were in vogue fifty years or so ago, just before the advent of Sullivan. The composers mentioned in the preceding chapters stood, of course, still high in popular favour, but it is to the consideration of the songs of some of the other song-writers of the period that we have to turn our attention now.

There are very few songs, even of those already mentioned, that have had a more lasting popularity than "Alice, where art thou?" which still enjoys the distinction of being the favourite item in the répertoire of every itinerant cornet-player. This song was written by Joseph Ascher, a pianist, and the curious part of it is that he seems to have written no other song that achieved any popularity at all, unless it were "I'll think of thee." Indeed, though he wrote a number of piano pieces, the list of songs standing to his name could be reckoned on the fingers of one hand, and Ascher must be regarded practically as a one-song man.

"Alice, where art thou?" instantly sprang into favour. It was first offered to Duncan Davidson (brother of James W. Davidson, the *Times* critic), who had a small music business at the corner of Regent Street, and had formerly been chief clerk with a Mr. Wessel, the predecessor of Ashdown and Parry. Wessel, it may be noted, originally had a shop over Verrey's, but afterwards removed to Hanover Square, where, when he retired, Ashdown and Parry took over the business. What Ascher received for the song history does not relate, but the eventual publishers must have made a fortune out of it. The words were written by W. Guernsey, who was also the author of "I'll think of thee."

Another popular song which *was* published by Davidson was Henry Smart's "Lady of the Lea," which was sung so much by Madame Sainton-Dolby. Here, again, no other song of this composer's seems to have attracted much attention, though "Chrystabel," "I'm under the window," and "Only a Rose" were moderately popular.

Two other composers who may fairly be considered as one-song men are Alexander Reichardt, the composer of "Thou art so near and yet so far," and Brinsley Richards, who wrote "God bless the Prince of Wales," the English version of which was by G. Linley. Perhaps Reichardt's "My heart's in the highlands" and "Love's

Request" may put in a claim to be considered, but it is by "Thou art so near," which was sung by all the tenors of the time, that he is chiefly remembered to-day.

The year 1855 saw the publication of two songs that, while of entirely different types, were each very popular in their own way. The one was "Hybrias the Cretan," by J. W. Elliott, perhaps one of the finest bass songs ever written. The words are a translation from the Greek by Thomas Campbell. The other song was of the descriptive kind, dealing with a topical subject of the day, and written shortly after the institution of the Penny Post by Rowland Hill, to whom, appropriately enough, it was dedicated. This was "The Postman's Knock," by W. T. Wrighton, the words of which were written by L. M. Thornton. Curiously enough, I came upon a paragraph about Thornton only a little while ago in the *Bristol Press*, which, with all due acknowledgments, I will take the liberty of quoting here :—

"Not every song-writer is successful in the sense of gaining a fortune, but certain musical compositions, though they brought little pelf to their authors, have greatly enriched those who gave them to the world. 'The Postman's Knock' is an instance of a song making a fortune for the publishers, or nearly so. What Mr. W. T.

[*Elliott & Fry.*

MR. EDWARD GERMAN.

(*See pages* 251–253.)

[*Weston.*

MR. HAROLD BOULTON.

(*See pages* 184–186.)

Wrighton made out of the music of this one-time enormously popular song is not known, but L. M. Thornton, who wrote the words, received a guinea, and died in the Bath Workhouse on May 8, 1888, worn out and weary, and was only saved from a pauper's grave through the intervention of a kind friend. 'The Postman's Knock' was sung by everyone at one time, and was so popular that it was actually made the groundwork of a farce of the same name, by Thornton, which was produced almost simultaneously at the Surrey and Haymarket Theatres ; at the former on April 7, 1876, with Phelps in the leading part, and at the Haymarket four days later with Mr. W. Farren as the Postman. It ran at both theatres for some considerable time, and was praised by the press of the day, though, to tell the truth, it is a rather weak concoction. Thornton wrote a large number of songs of a distinctly homely character, and 'Sing, Sweet Bird,' the music for which was composed by Mr. Ganz, the words by Mr. Thornton, is still a popular ditty."

George Linley was a composer who wrote nearly all his own words, and some of his songs enjoyed a considerable vogue. Such were "The Ballad Singer," "The Contrabandista," "Fare thee well, my own true love," and "On the past look not with sorrow." With regard to this

last the following rather quaint announcement appeared in the advertisement columns of a contemporary paper :—

"Messrs. Moutrie, having disposed of two thousand copies of George Linley's song 'On the past look not with sorrow,' regret to announce that someone mischievously melted the plates, and therefore they propose re-engraving it if they obtain subscribers' names for a sufficient number of copies."

To the same period belongs the still popular song "I arise from dreams of thee," by Charles Salaman, another of whose songs, "What will you bring to me, sweet?" was also a great favourite; the songs of Rivière, and of Frank Mori, a composer who had a brief vogue, and is chiefly remembered by his "I love my love in the springtime," "Whither art thou roaming?" and "'Twas on a Sunday morning." With regard to the last-mentioned song, it is amusing to note that the word "Sunday" was objected to by the Exeter Hall authorities, and the performance of the song forbidden unless the offending word was changed to "Monday"; and as "Monday" it was sung by Miss Kathleen Fitzwilliam, who first produced it.

Rivière's most popular ballad was probably "Spring, Spring," which, it is said, was refused by practically every publisher in London.

Finally the composer decided to publish it himself at his own expense, and the song "caught on" with such rapidity that copies could hardly be printed fast enough to meet the demand.

An Irish song that was very popular about this period, and is still well known to-day, was "Dear Little Shamrock," composed by William Jackson, a violinist, specially for his wife, who was a singer of some repute. The words of the song were by Andrew Cherry.

This epoch was distinguished by the fact that the fair sex first began to take, at least to any appreciable extent, an active part in song composition about this time. Apart from Lady Dufferin, the composer of that beautiful song "Oh, Bay of Dublin," three names stand out as the pioneers of woman's right to meet man on his own ground in the matter of ballad writing —Sainton-Dolby, Claribel, and Virginia Gabriel. Hitherto there had been only a few isolated instances; but the three ladies referred to wrote a number of songs which were immensely popular in their day.

Of these Madame Sainton-Dolby was composer and singer too. As a singer she achieved great distinction. "Miss Dolby," says *Grove*, "remained unrivalled as a singer of oratorio and English ballads. The admirable skill with which

she controlled a powerful contralto voice, the exquisite intonation, perfect enunciation, and noble declamation which distinguished her singing, caused her to take a very high place, not only among English, but among European artists of the present century."

As a composer Sainton-Dolby wrote several pleasing ballads, many of which she used to sing herself. Among those were "My love he stands upon the quay," "When we are old and grey," "The White Cockade," the words of all three by Weatherly; "The Faded Letter," words by H. M. Burnside; "Teddington Lock," words by Edward Oxenford; and "In the old-fashioned way," which was sung at one time by Edward Lloyd. She also published a setting of the "Sands of Dee."

I have named Lady Dufferin as the composer of "Oh, Bay of Dublin," and as such she is always regarded. It is therefore somewhat curious to find the song entered in the British Museum music catalogue thus:

> "Oh, Bay of Dublin"—Irish melody. Sung and composed by Miss Dolby. The words written and the music arranged by Lady Dufferin.

It would be interesting to learn, if the entry is correct, how much of the melody as we now know it may be credited to Miss Dolby, and how much to Lady Dufferin.

Claribel, a pseudonym adopted by Mrs. Charlotte Alington Barnard, was a writer of lyrics as well as of music. She wrote the words of many songs by other composers, as well as her own. The most famous of all the latter was "Come back to Erin," sung by her fellow-composer Sainton-Dolby. The list of Claribel's songs is a very long one, and it is only possible to mention a few of the most popular. Such were "I cannot sing the old songs," "Golden Days," "Strangers yet," "When I was young and fair," "Robin Redbreast," and "Far away in Bonnie Scotland." This composer has sometimes been credited with being the first to introduce the royalty system on songs, though how much truth there is in the assertion I do not know.

Even more popular, perhaps, were the songs of Virginia Gabriel. "Only," "Nightfall at Sea," "You'll not be long away," "Happy Days," "My Secret," "The Forsaken," "Somebody's Darling," and a host of others, were songs that our fathers and mothers are fond of citing when posing as *laudatores temporis acti* in the matter of drawing-room ballads. Her songs were most simple and melodious, qualities which no doubt had much to do with their popularity.

Sir Charles Santley, in his *Reminiscences*, has an interesting reference to Virginia Gabriel:

"She was a staunch friend of mine," he says; "I was a standing dish at all her musical parties, unless I happened to be engaged at a public concert. Her songs were always melodious; several became great favourites. She was a pupil of Molique, and would have achieved some solid, enduring work had she not allowed enthusiasm to override discretion; she possessed the 'fatal facility' which has militated against the lasting success of many composers of higher rank."

I have left to the last in this chapter the songs of Wilhelm Ganz, because, though his first song was published in this period of "Fifty Years Ago," the majority of his songs have been written since, and he is still writing to-day.

The song referred to was "Sing, Birdie, Sing," which was dedicated to Louisa Venning, a famous soprano of her day, who sang it in 1859 at the composer's concert at the (then) New St. James's Hall. "The Murmuring Sea," Ganz's second song, was published about the same time.

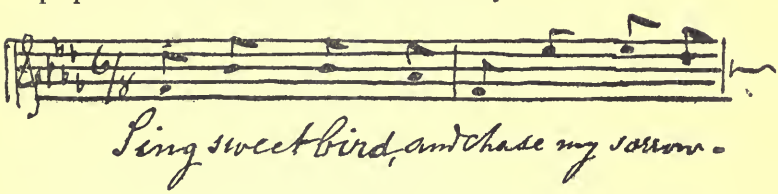
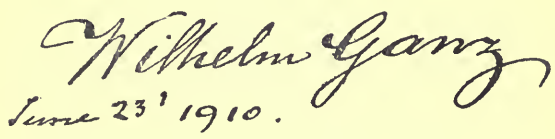
His next song, "The Nightingale's Trill," was composed for Madame Parepa, another famous soprano with a wonderfully high and flexible voice. The composer went round to her house with it, but she was unwell and confined to her room, so he sent it up to her.

She sent it down again and said she didn't like it. However, a few days later, when she was feeling better—or was it a case of *varium et mutabile ?*—she looked through it again and took a great fancy to it. Eventually she made it essentially her own and secured an immense success with it, being engaged at a number of concerts, both in England and Scotland, specially to sing this and "Sing, Birdie, Sing." "The Nightingale's Trill" was sung, it may be noted, by Adelina Patti at the composer's concert in 1898.

"When thou wilt be my bride" was written for Sims Reeves. He was to have sung it at the composer's concert, but on receipt of the familiar telegram announcing his indisposition it was sung by George Perren in his stead, and sympathetically encored.

Another of Ganz's successes was "Sing, Sweet Bird." When Melba came to England she brought a letter of introduction to Ganz, in which it was stated that she had already made this song popular in Australia. At her first concert in this country she sang "Ah fors si lui," followed by "Sing, Sweet Bird."

This song was first published by Ransford and Sons, a small firm in Princes Street. Ashdown and Parry afterwards bought the copyright for £500. Ransford, by the way, instituted a series of ballad concerts held once a year, which may

be said to have been the forerunners of the popular ballad concerts of to-day.



"Forget-me-not" was a favourite song of Madame Patey's. Once, when on a tour with Sims Reeves, she sang this song at the beginning of the programme, the composer accompanying her at the piano, and secured an encore. Reeves was quite upset about it, as he disliked anyone being encored before he appeared. Two other songs of this composer's that may be mentioned are "Dear Bird of Winter," dedicated to Adelina Patti, and "I seek for thee in every flower," a popular tenor song.

As proof of his abundant vitality as a composer, one has only to mention that Ganz published a new song last year, which, he says, bids fair to be as popular as its predecessors.

CHAPTER VII

SULLIVAN AND "THE LOST CHORD"

AS with Bishop and "Home, Sweet Home," so with Sullivan it is "The Lost Chord" of all his songs which will keep his name fresh in the memory and hearts of the people, apart, of course, from the popularity of his comic operas. Sullivan wrote many songs that for beauty and artistic worth take high rank among the compositions of masters of English music, and many other songs of the popular type; but none that approached "The Lost Chord" in popularity. "When he wrote 'The Lost Chord,'" says a recent writer, "Sir Arthur Sullivan probably wrote one of the six most popular songs ever penned."

The story of the circumstances under which this song was written has been told by Mr. Arthur Lawrence in his volume of Sullivan's memoirs, before referred to. It was on the occasion of the fatal illness of the composer's elder brother, Frederick, to whom he was deeply attached, and Sullivan had spent many anxious nights watching by the sick man's bedside.

"One night, the end was not very far off then, while his brother had for a time fallen into a peaceful sleep, and Sullivan was sitting as usual by the bedside, he chanced to come across some verses of Adelaide Procter's with which he had five years previously been much struck. He had then tried to set them to music, but without satisfaction to himself. Now in the stillness of the night he read them over again, and almost as he did so he conceived their musical equivalent. A sheet of music-paper was at hand, and he began to write. Slowly the music grew and took shape until, being absorbed in it, he determined to finish the song. Even if in the cold light of day it were to prove worthless, it would at least have helped to while away the hours of watching. So he worked on at it. As he progressed he felt sure that this was what he had sought for and had failed to find on the occasion of his first attempt to set the words. In a short time it was complete, and not long after in the publisher's hands."

In the meanwhile, however, Sullivan was to find the singer to interpret it. Curiously enough, just about the same time Antoinette Sterling conceived the idea of getting the words set for her to sing. Her husband had taken a very great fancy to the verses, and pointed out the possibilities they contained for making an

effective song, if only they could get the right man to set them. After some deliberation they decided that the composer who would be most likely to do them justice was Arthur Sullivan, and they accordingly approached him on the subject. "I *have* set them," was Sullivan's reply. And then in conversation it transpired that the song only wanted finishing off, as the last verse was not quite complete, but Sullivan agreed to have it ready in a few days' time. Antoinette Sterling used to recall how, the first time she went to rehearse it with him, Sullivan handed her the manuscript with the remark, "It won't be a success, I'm afraid."

The first performance took place at one of the ballad concerts, and what followed can best be told in the singer's own words:[1] "I shall never forget the anxiety felt by all of us as to how it would be received—least of all, perhaps, by myself. The composer himself was at the piano, and Sydney Naylor at the organ. What excitement when it was over! What applause burst out on all sides! It was the greatest success that had ever been made by a new song, and the wonderful sale of half a million copies during the following twenty-five years speaks to the lasting nature of this. The song was indeed an inspiration, and the composer wrote

[1] *Antoinette Sterling and Other Celebrities.* M. S. Mackinlay.

to me in a letter, shortly before his death, these words: 'I have composed much music since then, but have never written a second "Lost Chord."' "

Apropos of Antoinette Sterling and the "Lost Chord," a rather amusing incident happened at a concert given by Sims Reeves. Sullivan was again at the piano, and Sir John Stainer at the organ. Everybody was waiting for the song to begin, when suddenly Stainer was seen gesticulating wildly from the organ-loft. It appeared that the water which worked the bellows had never been turned on, and the instrument naturally remained dumb. The defect was soon remedied, but many of the audience thought that the whole thing had been arranged for dramatic effect to illustrate the chord which was lost and couldn't be found.

The lasting popularity of the "Lost Chord" was never in doubt for a single moment, a fact which adds considerable piquancy to the following comment culled from a musical paper of the period :—

"'The Lost Chord,' a new song by Arthur Sullivan, possesses great sameness, and is not equal to many of his earlier songs ! "

Though I have dealt with this song first in this chapter, chronologically speaking it

[*De Marchi Carlo.*

SIR F. PAOLO TOSTI.

[*Portman Studios.*

SIG. TITO MATTEI.

(*See pages* 253-257.)

comes almost last of all Sullivan's popular ballads outside his light operas. It was published in 1877, before which practically all his most successful songs of this type had made their appearance.

Two of the most popular of these, "Let Me Dream Again" and "Sweethearts," were published two years previously. Writing of these in 1876, our critic, quoted above in his reference to the "Lost Chord," is disposed to be less captious, and becomes, in fact, enthusiastic, as the following little paragraphs will show :—

"Arthur Sullivan's lovely song 'Let Me Dream Again' still holds the first place at all concerts, and is the most popular song of the present day."

"Arthur Sullivan's song 'Sweethearts' is still the favourite tenor song. It is to be heard at all concerts where the services of Mr. Edward Lloyd are engaged, and when rendered by this popular singer is without exception rapturously encored."

Another song of Sullivan's which Antoinette Sterling made immensely popular was "The Chorister." This was originally published with different words and under a different title, as one of three songs known as "The Young Mother," but it attracted very little attention,

probably on account of the inferiority of the words. Sullivan had sold the songs to a publisher for a few guineas, and the purchaser was glad some years later to dispose of them to another publisher for an insignificant sum. The latter sent the music of one of the songs to Weatherly and suggested he should write new words to it. "Then," says Weatherly, in speaking of the incident, "without any suggestion from Sullivan, but entirely on my own, I wrote 'The Chorister.' Madame Sterling, who was very difficult to please with words, and who would sing no song unless she honestly felt the words, took up the song, and in a very short time the receipts of the publisher were enormous." Instances of this kind are not unknown in the history of music publishing, and they only go to prove how difficult it is to prophesy about the fate of any particular song, and upon what varied circumstances may depend its ultimate success or failure. Herein, too, lies hidden the germ of a very vexed question, which will probably never be satisfactorily settled — the relative value of words and music in estimating the success of a popular song.

Of Sullivan's other songs of the popular type the following are probably the best known today: "Will He Come?" another lyric of Adelaide Procter's; "If Doughty Deeds," "Once

Again," "Golden Days," "The Sailor's Grave," "The Distant Shore," and "My Dearest Heart."

"The Absent-minded Beggar" stands, of course, in a category by itself. "This was a song," says Mr. Findon in his *Life of Sullivan*, "written for the 'man in the street,' but certain critics, in whose eyes Sullivan could do no right, took serious objection to it on account of what they called its vulgarity. In the postscript to a letter he wrote: 'I am glad you appreciate the spirit in which the "Absent-minded Beggar" is written. I have no doubt that the Academicals will turn up their nose at it. They don't like a tune that the people can sing.'"

"The Absent-minded Beggar" was not the first poem of Rudyard Kipling's that Sullivan had been anxious to set. One of a very different kind, the well-known "Recessional," had greatly attracted him, but he could not succeed in getting a setting to satisfy himself. His biographer, Mr. Lawrence, gives in facsimile an interesting and characteristic letter which Sullivan received from Kipling on the subject, in which he expresses a hope that Sullivan would some day see his way "to the one inevitable setting that must be floating about somewhere," and adds, "there will be no other setting authorised

by me." Unfortunately the "inevitable setting" was never realised.

Among Sullivan's earliest published songs were a set of Shakespeare songs, of one of which, "Orpheus with his lute," a critic has said that it was probably his best secular song from a musical point of view. Speaking of these songs, which were published in 1863, Sullivan once said: "I composed six Shakespearian songs for Messrs. Metzler and Co., and got five guineas apiece for them. 'Orpheus with his lute,' 'The Willow Song,' 'O Mistress Mine' were amongst them, the first having been since then a steady income to the publisher."

"The success of his vocal pieces," says Mr. Findon in his book, "soon enabled him to assume a more independent attitude towards the publishers, and with Messrs. Boosey he arranged for the publication of his works on the more satisfactory basis of the royalty system."

Lyric writers are often taken to task for not writing better poetry, but it is not often that a Poet Laureate is hauled over the coals for not writing better lyrics! In Mr. Lawrence's *Life of Sullivan*, however, he quotes some comments by the latter on Tennyson as a writer of words for music. "He would write a simple song or ballad," said Sullivan, "wherein the music to each verse should be the same, but which really

required a separate setting, and would make strong accents in one verse where in the corresponding place in another verse he would place a weak one, so that the ballad became most difficult for setting to music."

Tennyson and Sullivan collaborated in a miniature song-cycle, "The Window, or the Song of the Wrens," which the former wrote specially for Sullivan. Tennyson afterwards added a preface, which many of Sullivan's friends thought somewhat of a slight upon the composer. But Tennyson in a letter to the latter disclaimed all such intention, and explained that his remarks had no reference to Sullivan's music at all. The preface was as follows :—

"Four years ago Mr. Sullivan requested me to write a little song-cycle, German fashion, for him to exercise his art upon. He had been very successful in setting such old songs as 'Orpheus with his lute,' and I drest up for him, largely in the old style, a puppet, whose almost only merit is, perhaps, that it can dance to Mr. Sullivan's instrument. I am sorry that my four-year-old puppet should have to dance at all in the dark shadow of these days; but the music is now completed, and I am bound by my promise.

"A. TENNYSON.

"*December*, 1870."

Later Sullivan set two other of Tennyson's songs, "O Swallow, Swallow" and "Tears, Idle Tears," which were not published till after his death. They were produced by Kennerley Rumford at the Butt-Rumford concert at St. James's Hall in October, 1900.

Of Sullivan's method of composing he has himself said that with him rhythm came first and melody second. "The use of the piano would limit me terribly," he remarked once to Arthur Lawrence, who records the conversation in his book; "and as to the inspirational theory, although I admit that sometimes a happy phrase will occur to one quite unexpectedly rather than as the result of any definite reasoning process, musical composition, like everything else, is the outcome of hard work and steady persistence."

No account of Sullivan would be complete without a passing reference to the name of Sir W. S. Gilbert. The story of their long partnership in the production of light operas is, of course, well known, and can hardly be said to come under the scope of this book. But Gilbert wrote the lyrics of many of Sullivan's songs outside the Savoy operas, and the words of two of the most popular, "Sweethearts" and "The Distant Shore," are by him.

Talking of the Savoy operas reminds me of another paragraph I came across in an old

musical journal of the period, which the lapse of nearly forty years has made amusing.

"Arthur Sullivan's new operetta, *H.M.S. Pinafore*, is a failure; there is only one air in it at all likely to take the popular ear. Let others say or write what they like, Arthur Sullivan has not added to his reputation in composing *H.M.S. Pinafore.*"

A very Daniel come to judgment!

CHAPTER VIII

SOME COMPOSERS OF SULLIVAN'S DAY

THE mention of Sullivan's Savoy operas calls to mind the names of two other operatic composers, Alfred Cellier and Edward Solomon. The latter is chiefly remembered as the composer of *The Nautch Girl*, *The Red Hussar*, and *The Vicar of Bray*, an opera that had only a moderate run. Of his separate songs "The Bonny Oak Tree" and "The Stile at the End of the Lane" were fairly popular.

The most famous of Cellier's songs were "So Fare Thee Well," out of *Doris*, and "Queen of My Heart" and "Be Wise in Time," from *Dorothy*. "So Fare Thee Well" is one of Ben Davies's favourite songs, and he has probably sung it more often than any singer living. It may not be generally remembered that Cellier wrote a "serious" cycle which Ben Davies produced. The cycle, says the latter, was an immense success with the audience, but the critics would have none of it. For them Cellier was a writer of light operas, and as such incapable of any good serious work.

"Queen of My Heart" is, of course, inseparably associated with the name of Hayden Coffin. His singing of this song was a treat worth going a long way to hear, and when *Dorothy* was revived recently, called forth as unbounded an enthusiasm as ever.

It is a curious fact, which may not be generally known, that "Queen of My Heart" existed in another form before it was included in *Dorothy*. Cellier had originally published it seven years before, with different words, under the title of "Old Dreams." When the new words were written for its inclusion in the opera, and it became "Queen of my Heart," "Old Dreams" was republished as a "ladies'" version of the song, but it never attained much popularity in that form.

Of Cellier's separate songs, apart from his operas, the best known were "Fly, little song, to my love," "I told my love," of which he wrote both words and music, "Over hill, over dale," and "There once was a time, my darling," sung by Edward Lloyd.

The era of Sullivan, which may be said, roughly speaking, to cover a period of about forty years (1860-1900), was a flourishing time for the popular ballad. The list of song-writers of that time whose names are well known to-day is a very long one. Some are yet alive and writing songs,

while others, alas! have long since joined the great majority. But their songs still live, and though for the most part they mark a fashion that to-day has somewhat gone out of date, they are by no means forgotten by those of the present generation.

In dealing with composers and popular songs of this period it is difficult to know where to begin. As I have said, the list is a long one, and it is impossible to include everyone, and equally impossible to adhere to any strict chronological arrangement.

One of the first songs that springs to the mind is Frederic Clay's "I'll sing thee songs of Araby." The popularity of this imperishable song is something amazing; three successive generations have acclaimed it with delight as sung by Sims Reeves, Edward Lloyd, and Ben Davies, and it shows no signs of waning yet. Ben Davies tells me that when he was singing recently at the Palace Theatre, the audience frequently used to call out a demand for "Araby," not only from the stalls, but from the upper regions of the house.

Almost as popular, though in a somewhat different way, is Clay's setting of Charles Kingsley's "The Sands of Dee." As before mentioned, both Hullah and Hatton had set these words, and, I believe, a number of other

composers also; but Clay's has been the one to live. It is still sung constantly by Plunket Greene, and those who have heard him sing it will never want a finer interpretation.

Of Clay's other songs "The Reaper and the Flowers" and "She wandered down the mountain side" are probably the best remembered to-day, though neither of them enjoyed anything approaching the popularity of "Araby."

In a curious little magazine entitled *Musical Jottings*, which had a brief existence during the seventies, there used to appear each month a column of so-called criticisms on the songs of the day. Some of these make distinctly amusing reading, and I shall take the opportunity of quoting a few here and there throughout this and succeeding chapters. Of Clay our critic has the following to say :—

"Frederic Clay's new song 'The Reaper and the Flowers' is gaining in popularity; it is like all Mr. Clay's songs, well written, and will soon equal the success of his song 'She wandered down the mountain side.'"

For a song of an entirely different type there is Odoardo Barri's "The Old Brigade," which, though it has probably outlived its popularity now, was an immense favourite for many years. I wonder whether this is the song referred to in the following "musical jotting"? If so, the

prophecy therein displayed becomes a little amusing.

"'Shoulder to Shoulder—Heart to Heart.' This is styled by the publisher 'The new national song,' but we fear only a few copies will be disposed of."

Barri was the composer of a number of popular songs, among them "The River and the Maiden" and "The Land of Dreams." He also appears to have written, probably as a sort of musical joke, a vocal waltz entitled the "Song of the Gout," an achievement which apparently upset "our critic" considerably. "Neither a pleasant subject or a pleasing song," he says with crushing brevity. It must be confessed that the association of gout and a waltz song does seem a little incongruous.

Frederick Bevan wrote a number of popular songs, notably "The Flight of Ages" and "Peg Away," two songs of very dissimilar types. One of his latest, and perhaps the most popular of all, was "The Admiral's Broom," the words of which are by Weatherly. Theo Bonheur's "The King's Own" and "The Boys are Marching," W. H. Jude's "The Wonders of the Deep" and "Deep in the Mine," and Meyer Lutz's "Three Jolly Tars," the words of which were written by Madame Foli especially for her husband, must also be reckoned among the popular songs of

[*E. H. Mills.*

MR. A. H. BEHREND.

[*Hana.*

MR. D'AUVERGNE BARNARD.

(*See pages* 258–264.)

the day. Bonheur's famous duet "The Battle Eve" was also a great favourite.

"Jack's Yarn" was an immensely popular song, of which millions of copies are said to have been sold. The composer was Louis Diehl, who died only the other day. G. R. Sims, in announcing Diehl's death in the *Referee*, recalls the fact that the latter was his first musical collaborator, their first joint work being the little musical playlet "A Dress Rehearsal," which was produced at the Langham Hall in 1877. Diehl also set G. R. Sims's first song, "The Lights o' London," which was sung by Miss Orridge at the ballad concerts with the greatest success, but he will be best remembered by "Jack's Yarn" and other successful sailor songs, and a ballad of a different type, "Going to Market."

Of Michael Watson's songs, "Thy Sentinel am I" was probably the most popular, though "Anchored" may be said to have run it very close. Watson wrote the words of a great many of his songs, and occasionally also wrote lyrics for other composers. This dual rôle of composer and lyric-writer appears to have been fairly common at this period. A notable instance was that of Marzials, who, while known as the composer of a number of immensely popular songs, also figures largely as a lyric-writer. He was

the author, amongst others, of Goring Thomas's lovely song "A Summer Night," and was responsible for many of the English versions to Thomas's French songs.

Other names that occur to the mind in this connection are those of Hamilton Aidé, the composer of those two popular songs "Brown Eyes or Blue Eyes" and "Remember or Forget," D'Arcy Jaxone, Cotsford Dick, and Whyte-Melville, of "Drink, Puppy, Drink" fame, and author of Tosti's "Good-bye."

Malcolm Lawson is perhaps best known by his "Last Words" and "Marjory Daw," and his arrangement of the *Songs of the North*, edited by Harold Boulton; Prince Poniatowski by his famous "Yeoman's Wedding Song," so long a favourite of Sir Charles Santley's, and Sir Alfred Scott Gatty, apart from his well-known plantation songs, by "O Fair Dove" and "True till Death."

Frederic Löhr and Berthold Tours are two names that deserve mention here, the former for his "Margarita" and "Out on the Deep," and the latter for "Stars of the Summer Night," "The Angel at the Window," and "The Maiden and the Sunbeam."

Stephen Glover's "The Blind Girl to her Harp," W. C. Levey's "Heart to Heart" and "My Little Maid," A. J. Caldicott's "Unless,"

Reginald de Koven's "Oh, Promise Me," P. de Faye's "Tell her I love her so" and "Over the Hills of Normandy," J. W. Cherry's "Will of the Wisp," and the songs of Lord Henry Somerset may all be said to belong to this period.

An immensely popular song of the day was "Eileen Alannah," by J. R. Thomas, who also wrote "'Tis but a little faded flower." "Eileen Alannah" was originally published by Hopwood and Crew, with whom it had a very small sale, and they eventually disposed of it to Hutchings and Romer for the mere cost of the plates. In the latter's hands, and those of Evans and Co., who purchased it at Hutchings and Romer's sale, it had a very considerable success, after being considered practically dead for a good many years.

Horace Bernton, the composer of "Canst thou ask me if I love thee?" and "When first we met," may be briefly mentioned, if only for the sake of quoting an amusing (if somewhat crushing) criticism of the first-named song from the pen of our critic before referred to. He says :—

"Of all the rubbish that was ever written we have now certainly a specimen. The words are of a very sentimental nature, and to obtain an idea of the quality of the music sing the word

flow-o-er to the notes C E below, and then ascend to G, and then imagine having to conclude with 'My darling, yes, for evermore,' the *er* being on the low B. Two shillings, *of course*, for such music!"

Even more quaint is the succeeding paragraph.

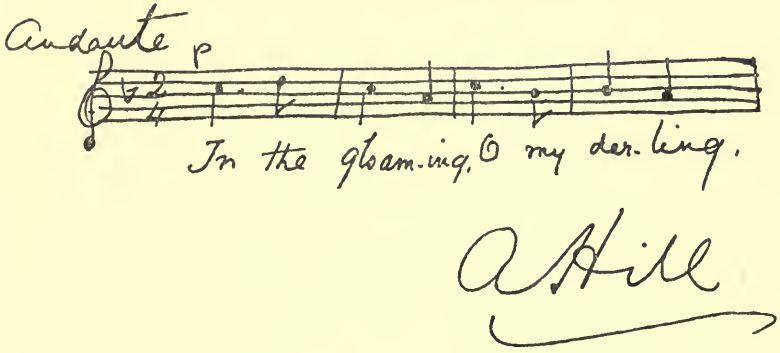
"'Castles in the Air'—Scotch song by Robert Adams, with an illustration of a curly-haired little boy bigging [*sic*] castles in the air!"

After this excursion into the realms of fancy he allows his spleen to take hold of him again. His next victim is Lady Lindsey, who wrote several fairly popular ballads about this time. One, however, was evidently *not* popular with our critic, for he says:—

"'By the Shore'—song by Lady Lindsey. A slow, dismal song for contralto; the words 'by the shore' are repeated no less than nine times, and are rhymed with 'nevermore,' 'evermore,' 'o'er,' and 'southern shore,' so that it sounds perfectly ridiculous. We regret that words and music are by the same composer."

However, in turning his attention to another lady composer, his heart becomes softened again. "'In the Gloaming,'" he writes, "is a universal favourite, and we believe has a larger circulation than any other song entirely on its merits." "In the Gloaming," as everybody knows, was written by Lady Arthur Hill, when she was Annie

Fortescue Harrison. It was published in 1877, and was her first published song, though she began composing at the age of fourteen. The song enjoyed immense popularity for a great number of years, over 140,000 copies being sold between 1880 and 1889. In 1881 it was adapted as a march for the 2nd Middlesex Artillery, of which Lord Arthur Hill was the commanding officer, and has been whistled, sung, and played on barrel-organs in every quarter of the globe. The melody has been used as a hymn tune both in London and in the region of the Rocky Mountains, and only lately the composer was told by an Australian that it is still sung in every bush village to what are called "school songs." The words of the song were by Meta Orred, and appeared in her published poems.



Other well-known songs by this composer were "Let me forget thee," words by D'Arcy

Jaxone; "In the Moonlight," words by Marzials; "The Veteran," words by Colonel Dudley Sampson, written for and sung by Foli with immense success, and settings of four of Weatherly's lyrics —"That Night of Stars," "Time Was," "We Met Again," and "Yesteryear." Quite recently, after a lapse of many years, Lady Hill has begun composing again, her latest songs being "Rosemary for Remembrance," "Love's Last Gift" (words of both by Weatherly), and a French song, "Toute à moi," the words from Swinburne's *Chastelard*.

Another very popular song of the time by a lady composer was "Fiddle and I," words by Weatherly, and music by Mrs. Arthur Goodeve. This song was still very popular in drawing-rooms not so many years ago. The same may be said of "The Bird and the Rose" and one or two other songs by Amy Horrocks.

The songs of Hope Temple, another lady composer, were also very popular during this period. Among these may be mentioned "My Lady's Bower," "Rory Darlin'," and "A Golden Argosy," words of all three by Weatherly; "A Garden of Lilies," words by H. M. Burnside; "Memories," words by Mary Mark Lemon; "The Scent of the Mignonette," words by Clifton Bingham; and "Were we lovers then?"

While on the subject of lady composers it may

not be out of place to mention here Maude Valerie White, who, though she is still writing songs to-day, may be said to belong to this period, inasmuch as her first published songs appeared in 1882. These were the two well-known songs "To Mary" ('Oh Mary dear, that you were here') and "To Althea from Prison." These were followed by two of the most popular songs of any generation, "The Devout Lover" and "Absent yet Present."

The list of this composer's songs which have been published during the last twenty years is a very long one, and it is only possible to mention a few of the best known. Such are "So we'll go no more a-roving," "My dear and only love" (a setting of the Earl of Montrose's famous lyric), *Three Little Songs* ("When the Swallows," "A Memory," "Let us Forget"), sung with so much success by Kennerley Rumford, and "The Old Grey Fox," a great favourite with the same singer.

One other lady composer, though belonging strictly to a later period, may be included here, as her first song was published under her maiden name (Ellen Riley) in 1880. This was Ellen Wright, whose lamented death occurred some years ago, and the song mentioned above was entitled "Come back, oh birdie." Twelve years later she published her first song under her

married name, and this was followed by a number of immensely popular songs, of which, of course, "Violets" was the most popular of all.

I remember in my early days of lyric-writing the pleasure I experienced at receiving a letter from her asking for permission to set my lyric "I have a garden fair," which was afterwards published. The letter was written just at the time when "Violets" was becoming so much the rage.

Of Ellen Wright's other popular songs may be mentioned "In My Garden," "A Song of Waiting," "Life is Vain," and "Golden Stars."

The songs of H.R.H. Princess Beatrice (Princess Henry of Battenberg) also rightly belong to this period, the most popular of them being "The Sunny Month of May," "The Green Cavalier's Song," and "Retrospection."

Ciro Pinsuti has a long list of popular ballads to his credit, which the mere mention of the names will at once recall to memory. "The Bugler" and "The Last Watch," the words of both being by Weatherly, were among the most popular, and others were "I Fear no Foe," words by Edward Oxenford, and "Queen of the Earth" and "Sleep on, Dear Love," words by D'Arcy Jaxone. Another favourite was his setting of G. R. Sims's lyric "The Lifeboat."

58, Maida Vale,
London. W.

July 16th 1907

Dear Sir — I am very charmed by your little lyric "Shabby Garden Fair" and I will set it — but I must tell you I am bound to Mons. Ricordi for 6 years — & while for songs a year and I am afraid that you then would not care for them as much as two years hence. However if you care to reserve it for that time (perhaps sooner!) I will take it

Yours truly
Ellen Wright

According to *Musical Jottings* he also wrote a "charming and very pretty soprano song" entitled "Welcome, Pretty Primrose," sung by Zare Thalberg. "This," adds our critic, "is *the* most fashionable song for the drawing-room this month." Such is fame!

The songs of Henry Pontet, or to give him his full and rightful name, Théodore Auguste Marie Joseph Piccolomini, were both numerous and popular. The most popular of those written under his own name was undoubtedly "Whisper and I shall hear," to which there is rather an interesting little story attached. The song had been bought by Osborn and Tuckwood, and put away in a safe, where it had lain languishing for no less a period than four and a half years. One day D'Auvergne Barnard, while acting as musical adviser to the firm, fished it out, and was immediately struck with its possibilities. "This will be a great song," said he—and it was. The words of this song were written by G. Hubi-Newcombe, who also wrote the "Haven of Love," with the same composer.

Piccolomini wrote a great number of sacred songs. He was in the habit of selling his songs outright for a small sum, and "Ora Pro Nobis" is said to have brought him a five-pound note. On the other hand, the publishers bought an infinite number of manuscripts from him which they

never used, and, so the story goes, had at his death a safe full not only of MSS., but of I.O.U.'s.

As Henry Pontet he wrote a great many successful songs, of which the best known were "Carissima," "Snowflakes," "Poor Wounded Heart," "Tit for Tat," and "Big Ben." A newspaper cutting of the year 1878 says of the latter that it was "sung at the Promenade Concerts, Covent Garden, on Friday, November 1st, and was the success of the evening. Mr. Thurley Beale was tremendously applauded and encored amidst great excitement."

Theo Marzials has already been mentioned as composer and lyric-writer too. Of his love-songs "Ask Nothing More," a setting of a poem of Swinburne's, had a very long popularity, as well as his "Leaving yet Loving," words by Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and a setting of Christina Rossetti's "Birthday" lyric "My Love is Come." A song of a different type but equally popular was the "River of Years," while mention may be made of his two duets "Friendship" ("My true love has my heart") and "Go, Pretty Rose."

"The song of the season, a perfect gem!" is our critic's verdict on "Twickenham Ferry," perhaps the most famous of all Marzials' ballads in its own line. The song was sung a great deal

by Mary Davies, and caught the public fancy immediately:—

O-hoi-ye-ho! Ho-ye-ho! Who's for the ferry?
(The briar's in bud, and the sun going down:)
It's late as it is and I haven't a penny,
And how shall I get me to Twickenham town?

There was quite a rage for "river songs" just at this time, and to this category belong Milton Wellings's "At the Ferry" and "The Old Lock," words by Weatherly. Two other Weatherly lyrics set by Wellings were "Turnham Toll" and "The world went very well then," both very popular songs. "Golden Love" was another successful song by this composer, but it was his "Some Day" that had the biggest vogue.

Wellings used to tell the story of the circumstances under which this song was composed. He had left his wife yachting in the Isle of Wight and was travelling up to London by train, when, happening to buy an evening paper, he saw the announcement of a yachting accident off Cowes. He immediately wired to his friends in the Isle of Wight for news and went home to await the answer. While pacing restlessly up and down the room he caught sight of some words by Hugh Conway which were lying on the table. Hoping to relieve his anxiety of mind, he sat down to the piano, and in a flash the whole song came to him. When the telegram

arrived announcing that all was well he finished off the song and took it to the publishers, who accepted it at once.

The songs of Jacques Blumenthal have enjoyed a wide and lasting popularity, but none more so, perhaps, than his delightful "My Queen," so magnificently sung by Santley. "The Message" and "The Requital" were also famous in their day; while of the others "Sunshine and Rain" and "An Evening Song" were perhaps the most popular.

Blumenthal's Tuesday evenings at Hyde Park Gate were a recognised feature of Musical London for many years. In a letter to me on the subject, Henry Bird, the accompanist, who was an intimate friend of Blumenthal's, says, in reference to these evenings: "I recall one night when the late Duke of Albany was invited; the music on this occasion was to be partly in the garden, which was illuminated with Chinese lanterns, etc., but first in the drawing-room. The Duke arrived with royal punctuality at the time of invitation, but many of the other guests had not yet arrived, so Blumenthal hastily got the glee singers to commence in the garden, taking the Duke there first until a sufficient number had assembled in the drawing-room, when the arranged programme of music commenced."

Henry Bird has in his possession an interesting souvenir of his friendship with the composer in the shape of a Moorish table inlaid with mother-of-pearl sandals. In a letter to him written after her husband's death two years ago, Madame Blumenthal writes: "It would give me great pleasure if you cared to have a little souvenir of our Tuesday evenings at Hyde Park Gate. It is a little coffee-table which I think you must often have seen in the smoking-room. We bought the mother-of-pearl clogs of Turkish women from Constantinople, and had them set in a table."

The name of Frank L. Moir is familiar as the composer of a number of popular songs, of which "Only Once More" and "Best of All" had perhaps the greatest vogue. Others that were well known some years ago were "A Knight of Old," "Children Asleep," "The Harbour Bay," "Watching for the Boats," "Grieve not, dear love," "The songs the children sing," and more recently, "Roll on, thou mighty sea" and "Down the Vale" (words by Gunby Hadath), but these are only a few of an immense number of songs by this composer, the words of many of which were written by Clifton Bingham.

To me the name of Frank Moir is associated with the fact that he set the first six lyrics I ever

wrote, some ten years ago. These were published in an album entitled *Silver Memories*. It was a whole year before I had another lyric published! This was "I have a garden fair," set by Ellen Wright, which has already been referred to above. It is somewhat of a coincidence that the first of the *Silver Memories* lyrics, entitled "Far out of the silver sea," was written in the identical spot—on the Hampshire coast looking over the Solent to the Isle of Wight—on which Harold Boulton wrote "I have a nest in the heather," set by Charles Braun, and published as one of *Three Songs of the Heather*, under the title of "Ever so far away."

Curiously enough Moir and I never met, as I lived in the country at the time, but we were frequent correspondents. I have before me a letter I received a few years before his death, at the time when the pirates were making such havoc among the popular songs of the day. It is one of his characteristic epistles, and as such I may perhaps be allowed to quote it here.

"27 Biddulph Mansions,
"Maida Vale, W.,
"*September* 15.

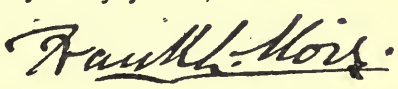
"Dear Simpson,

"I am so pleased with your kind letter. We have been at above for some time now, having to leave Stanmore because my dear little

girl Norah was engaged for the leading part in *The Water Babies* at the Garrick. So I had to say good-bye to my fields and hedgerows, and put my gun and rods into bed, so to speak.

"You will, I am sure, know that we of my wretched profession have been for long under a cloud. Mr. Balfour wrote me a promise to see our stupid bill (copyright) put right last session, but M.P.'s are much too busy with 'the lower classes'—who *know* they are going to get so much a week, while we, who have only brains, can go to—well, I won't bother you! I should much like to meet you, and a day's change would do me lots of good.

"Very truly yours,



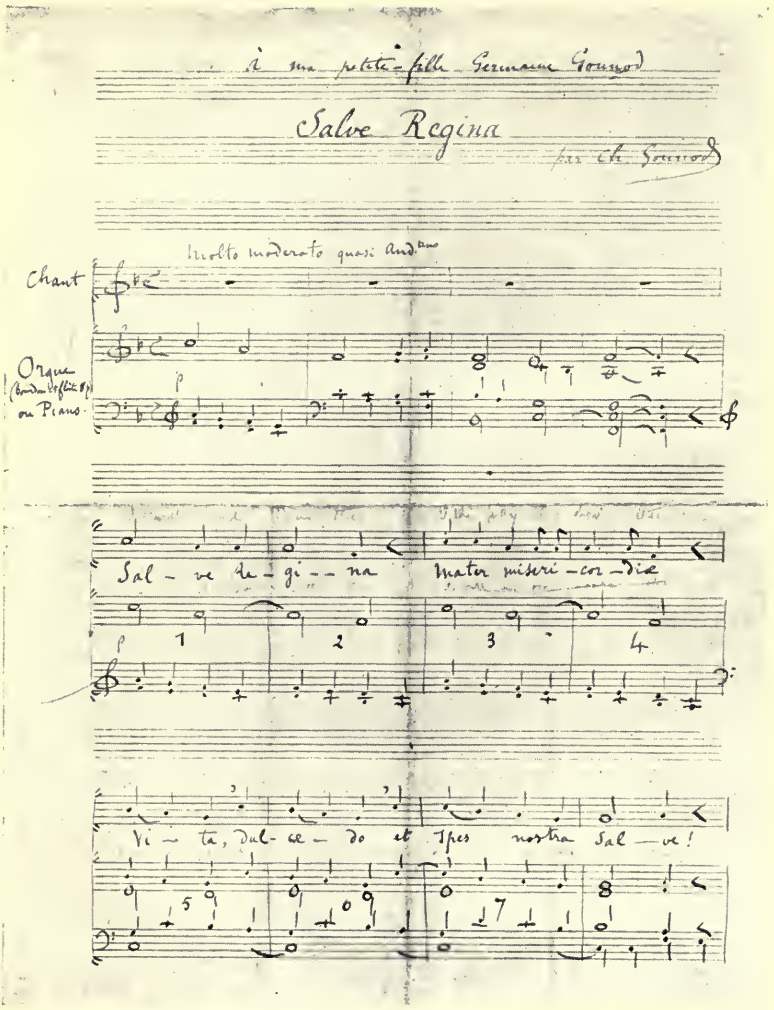
One more little "musical jotting" anent a song of Frank Moir's: "'Ah Me.' Song by Frank L. Moir. We can only recommend this to those who are pining over a lost love!" This song, by the way, appears to be the first one that Moir ever published.

A song that took the town by storm was Isidore de Lara's "The Garden of Sleep." The words were written by Clement Scott, and after the publication of the song he received hundreds of letters from all classes of people asking what

he meant by the title. It had never occurred to them that it meant a churchyard. The identical churchyard was that of Sidestrand, near Cromer, in Norfolk, "'mid the poppies and the corn." Each year the devouring sea has encroached further upon the resting-place of the dead, until the old churchyard tower now stands on the very "edge of the cliff" itself. The song sprang into instant popularity, and is supposed to have opened the eyes of the thousands of annual holiday-makers to the charms of "Poppyland."

Isidore de Lara wrote a number of other songs, among which were "Mine To-day," "All of my all," "How will it be?" and "After Silent Years," but none that has rivalled "The Garden of Sleep" in popularity. He used to sing his own songs in public a great deal, and is said to have given over two hundred recitals in ten years.

Of other popular songs of the period mention must be made of Walter Slaughter's songs, notably "The Dear Homeland," the words of which were written by Clifton Bingham; the songs of Gerald Lane, Gerard F. Cobb, W. M. Hutchinson, whose "Dream Faces," "Ehren on the Rhine," and "Side by Side to the Better Land," were all immensely popular in their day; and of Angelo Mascheroni, the copyright of whose "For all Eternity" was


à ma petite fille Germaine Gounod
Salve Regina
par Ch. Gounod
Molto moderato quasi And.te
Chant
Orgue (ou Harmonium) ou Piano
Sal - ve re - gi - na mater miseri - cor - di - æ
Vi - ta, dul - ce - do et spes nostra sal - ve!

FACSIMILE FIRST PAGE OF GOUNOD'S "SALVE REGINA."

recently sold for over £2000; of C. A. Trew, Felix Corbett, and C. A. Lidgey ("Earl Bristol's Farewell"), Augustus Barratt ("My Ships"), together with the songs of Sir Joseph Barnby, whose "When the tide comes in" was a favourite of Antoinette Sterling's; and Sir G. A. Macfarren's "The beating of mine own heart" (so constantly sung by Clara Novello) and "The lime trees by the river."

Gounod's sacred songs, such as "Nazareth" and "There is a green hill," must also be included. These were two of his earliest and were published by Novello. Afterwards Messrs. Phillips and Page approached the composer, and sent him a cheque with a request that he would set the words "The King of Love my Shepherd is." The completed manuscript reached the publishers within a few days of Gounod's receipt of their letter, and this song, which has had (and still has) an enormous sale, was followed by "Glory to Thee" and "For ever with the Lord," both commissioned in the same way.

After Gounod's death Mr. Sydney Page went to Paris and succeeded in purchasing the whole of Gounod's unpublished songs, amongst them being "O Divine Redeemer." All of these MSS. have now been published, with one exception, namely, "Salve Regina," a facsimile of which is, by the kindness of Mr. Page, reproduced

herewith. Of Gounod's secular songs mention must be made of the famous "Maid of Athens," and also of "When Thou art Nigh" and "O, that we two were maying."

It is interesting to note in passing that Mr. Sydney Page is himself a composer, having written a number of popular songs under the pseudonym of Fabian Rose, including "My Beloved Queen," "Rose of My Life," "Can You Forgive?" and "Love will tell the rest."

To this period, too, belong the songs of Arthur Goring Thomas, of which "A Summer Night," the words by Marzials, was probably the most "popular." Songs of a somewhat different type are those contained in his *Album of Twelve Lyrics*, to words by Harold Boulton. Of these "Time's Garden," "Under thy Window," and "The Willow" are perhaps the best known. His operas do not, of course, come under the scope of this book, but the duet "Dear Love of Mine" from *Nadeshda* may be noted as having been sung a great deal by Clara Butt and Kennerley Rumford, together with another duet of Goring Thomas's, the well-known "Night Hymn at Sea."

Harold Boulton has already been mentioned as having edited (in collaboration with A. C. Macleod) the collection of *Songs of the North*, the music of which was arranged by Malcolm

Lawson. He is also responsible for the editing of the *Songs of Four Nations*, in this case with Arthur Somervell as musical collaborator. In many instances he wrote entirely new versions to the words.

Of the number of delightful lyrics written by Boulton, he himself considers that in point of popularity "Time's Garden," set by Goring Thomas, "Glorious Devon," set by Edward German, and the well-known "Skye Boat Song" have been the most successful. With regard to the latter, Boulton relates that Professor Blackburn told him that when in the Highlands he heard the boatmen who were rowing himself and Mrs. Blackburn across to Roshven chanting a curious refrain to the words :—

Row us along,
Donald and John,
Over the sea to Roshven.

It was on this that Boulton founded the "Skye Boat Song."

Latterly he has turned his attention to the writing of "Imperial" songs, as he takes an active interest in what may be called the "Empire movement." His patriotic hymn "Canada," the music by Edward German, is an example of this style of work.

Some years ago he published an unique album

of twelve songs, the words of which were by himself, and the music of each by a different composer. The twelve composers were J. Barnby, Alfred Cellier, F. Corder, F. H. Cowen, C. H. Lloyd, Hamish MacCunn, A. C. Mackenzie, C. Hubert Parry, Arthur Somervell, C. V. Stanford, A. Goring Thomas, and Charles Wood—a galaxy of brilliant names that would be difficult to beat!

[*Russell.*

DR. F. H. COWEN.

[*Ruddock.*

MR. J. L. ROECKEL.

(*See pages* 248–251.)

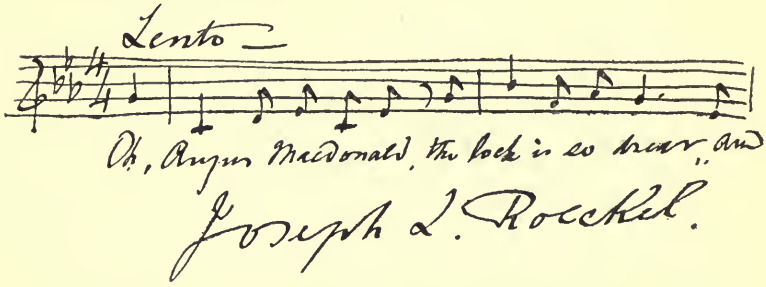
CHAPTER IX

AN HARMONIOUS QUARTET

THE title of this chapter may at first sight seem a little ambiguous, but it becomes clearer when it is explained that the "quartet" consists of Fred. E. Weatherly, a writer who has been writing lyrics for something approaching half a century, and the three composers of this era with whose work, as he himself states, he has been most closely associated during his long career. And whether applied to the results achieved during this association, or to the happy relationship between author and composers, the word "harmonious" may be counted equally appropriate.

The first name, which brings us down well within reach of modern times, is that of J. L. Roeckel, who at the age of seventy-two is still occasionally writing songs to-day. The number of Roeckel's successful compositions would fill a chapter, and their relative popularity is difficult to estimate. Perhaps "Angus Macdonald" is the one that has been a steady success over the greatest number of years,

though, to mention only a few others, "Prince Charming," "The Helmsman," "In the Old, Old Way," "The Storm-fiend," "The Skippers of St. Ives," and "Roses all the Way" were all immensely popular.



The ballad known as "The Three Old Maids of Lee" ("A Bird in the Hand") is, of course, a household word. The composer himself tells the story of this, perhaps one of his greatest "hits" in the way of songs. "When Weatherly brought the words to me I said, 'This will never do. No one will sing these words.' I put them aside for a year or more. One day I happened upon them, read them over, and the music came in ten minutes. I said to Weatherly, 'I've set "A Bird in the Hand."' 'You're too late,' he replied; 'a lady has been before you.' The lady, however, very kindly gave up the words when asked to do so. The success of the song was immediate and immense. Young girls sang it for the pleasure of poking fun at their aunts.

There was a spice of mischief in the words which took."

Weatherly, in response to my appeal for some information as to his share in the making of this humorous and long-lived ditty, sends me the following amusing contribution :—

"It may scarcely be credited, but when I first began writing songs no programme ever included anything approaching a humorous song, except perhaps the evergreen 'Simon the Cellarer.' Then I dared, and wrote 'The Three Old Maids of Lee.' When I suggested to Santley that he should sing it, his merry eye looked grave as he replied—

'Sing *that*, my Weatherly?
No! No! No!'

Nevertheless, with Roeckel's characteristic setting it made a very big success."

The next name of the quartet is that of J. L. Molloy. The list of Molloy's popular songs is so enormous that it is not possible to do more than mention a very small proportion of them, and of these the following may be considered fairly representative: "The Carnival," "The Clang of the Wooden Shoon," "Darby and Joan," "Dresden China," "The King's Highway," "The Lads in Red," "The Little Tin Soldier," "London Bridge," "Love's Old

Sweet Song," "Punchinello," "The Three Beggars," and "To-morrow will be Friday."

Nobody, probably, will be found to dispute the claims of "Darby and Joan" as to premiership in the matter of popularity. Of this song Weatherly, who, of course, wrote the words, tells me an amusing anecdote. He was playing the accompaniment for a curate's little wife—or a little curate's wife, no matter—when to his astonishment she cut the second verse. Afterwards in a quiet corner he asked the curate the reason. The latter gazed at him and murmured, "Of course she couldn't sing it. She's never had a baby, you see."

The song was a great favourite with Antoinette Sterling, and she used to relate a rather amusing incident in connection with it. She had gone off the platform after finishing the song, and when she returned to bow her acknowledgments she found the audience roaring with laughter and gazing up at the gallery. Turning her eyes in the same direction, she saw two people seated in the middle of the front row, each of whom had lost an arm. In the excitement of the moment they had joined forces, and were vigorously clapping their two remaining hands together.

"Molloy," says Mr. Mackinlay in his book, in which the above incident is recorded, "spent perhaps more time at Antoinette Sterling's house

than any of the other composers with whom she was friendly. Few people realise the immense pains taken over some songs to make them a success. He would spend hours, almost days, at the house, trying over little alterations of melody or accompaniment, when a new ballad was being made ready for its launching at the St. James's Hall. But all the unsparing trouble which was taken brought its result in such successes as 'Darby and Joan,' 'Love's Old Sweet Song,' 'Home, Dearie, Home,' 'We'll keep the Old Grey Mare, John,' and 'The Clang of the Wooden Shoon.'"

Of this last we may note *en passant* a "quaint" observation by "our critic," though doubtless meant to be complimentary to both song and singer: "This new song is most quaint; it is sung by Antoinette Sterling, whose deep contralto notes make it still more so!"

Of "London Bridge" Weatherly has another story to tell. "Molloy and I," he says, "were crossing Waterloo Bridge one evening on our way to his pretty house at Weybridge. He hummed me the burden of an old Devonshire song:—

'Jolly old sow,
Jolly old sow,
Jolly come with me, jolly old sow.'

'What does it suggest to you?' he asked me. 'It is the motion of people going over a

bridge,' I answered. 'Make a song of it, my boy.' And I did, and as it was on Waterloo Bridge, of course we called it 'London Bridge.' The first title would never have done. I don't know why."

Musical Jottings has an amusing little note as to "London Bridge": "Quaint as usual, Weatherly's words again, and sung by Mr. Maybrick. Not a song likely to be very successful!"

"Love's Old Sweet Song" may be said to have run a good second to "Darby and Joan" in the race for popularity. The words of this were by Clifton Bingham, who tells me that they were written at four o'clock in the morning in February, 1882, which seems an unpropitious time for writing a song of twilight. Bingham adds: "Molloy, Cowen, and J. L. Roeckel all wanted to set them; the two latter composers wrote, but the former 'wired' for them, and so obtained the preference."

The songs of Stephen Adams, the third member of the quartet, and equally famous as Maybrick the singer, present the same difficulty of choice in the matter of popularity. The list of his publications is an imposing one, and he is still actively engaged in song-writing to-day.

One of his earliest successes, if not *the* earliest, was "Nancy Lee." Wilhelm Ganz recalls the

[*Mullins.*

MR. STEPHEN ADAMS.

[*Elliott & Fry.*

MR. FRED E. WEATHERLY.

fact that he played it for Maybrick when the latter sang it in manuscript for the first time in public at a Stratford Bow subscription concert. Maybrick was somewhat nervous as to its reception, but his fears were soon allayed, as it secured a tremendous encore. It is said that the song was refused by several publishers, who have probably since regretted the fact, especially in view of the following paragraph which appeared in the columns of a musical journal in January, 1878: "'Nancy Lee' is the greatest song of the present day. Seventy thousand copies have been sold in about eighteen months, and yet the demand continues."

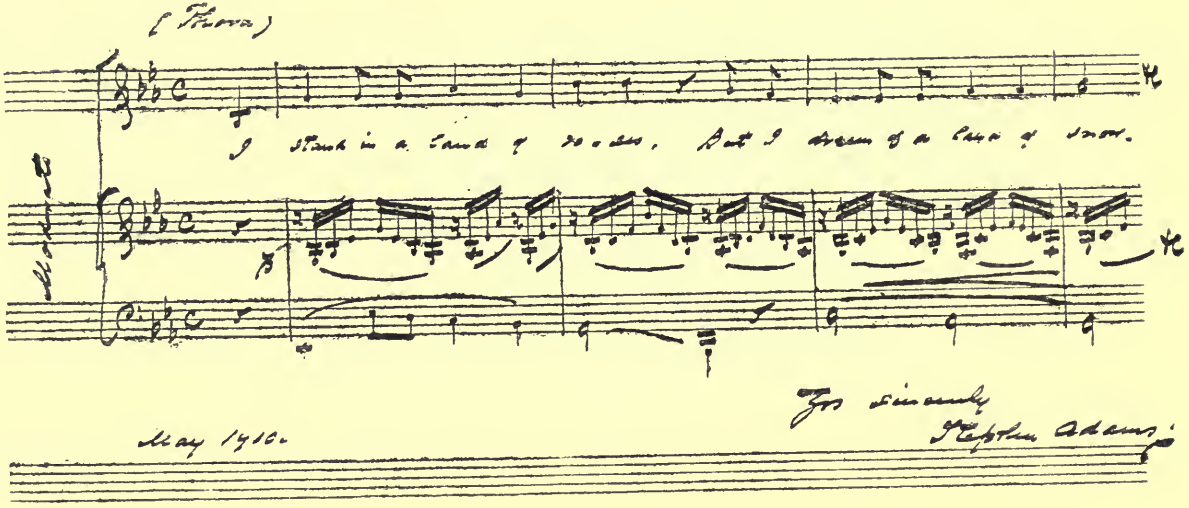
"An unmusical friend," said Weatherly once, in speaking of "Nancy Lee," "who prided himself on his common sense, told me that the refrain 'The sailor's wife, the sailor's star shall be' was a fine sentiment. He liked the idea that the sailor's wife was always looking after him, but he wanted to know whether the words meant that, being up aloft, she could always keep an eye on him."

An equally famous song was the "Midshipmite," which had a tremendous run of popularity. When sung by Maybrick himself at the St. James's Hall ballad concerts it created quite a furore. Apropos of this the following story, for which Mr. Mackinlay is my authority, is rather amusing:—

Once when Maybrick was singing the song at a concert, just as he came to the words 'with a long, long pull, and a strong, strong pull,' he stretched out his hand to turn over the music on the piano, and his cuff-link caught in the accompanist's hair. It was a wig, and it began to come off! Suddenly realising the situation, the accompanist clapped both his hands to his head just in time, and Maybrick was left to go on unaccompanied.

The words, as in the case of the great majority of Stephen Adams's songs, were written by Weatherly. "I love to think," he says, "that the words of 'The Midshipmite' were really composed towards the close of the Crimean War, when, as my mother and I sat under the old disused battery at Portishead, she showed me, lying in King Road, the great ship that had brought home Lord Raglan's body, though I am bound to confess that the song was not committed to paper till many years later."

Of Adams's other sea-songs may be mentioned "The Tar's Farewell" and "They All Love Jack," the latter of which was on everyone's lips some ten years ago. "The Owl" was an immensely popular song of a humorous type, while of still different types were "The Blue Alsatian Mountains," "A Warrior Bold," "Nirvana," and some of his more recent songs, such


(Flora)
I stand in a land of roses, But I dream of a land of snow.
May 1910.
Yrs sincerely
Leighton Adams

as "Farewell in the Desert," "Your Dear Brown Eyes," and "Thora."

Of his sacred songs, among which are "Babylon," "The Star of Bethlehem," and "The Holy City," the last named is probably one of the most successful songs of its kind ever written, and enjoys the unusual distinction for an English ballad of having been published in a German version. Its popularity has been, and still is, extraordinary, and the music pirates, at the time when they were flourishing like the green bay tree, made it their own especial prey.

Fred. E. Weatherly, the last member of this quartet, may be said to hold an unique position in the song-writing world. As a lyric-writer of over forty years' standing he has enjoyed the friendship of almost all the popular composers of his day, and it would be difficult to estimate the number of successful songs of which he is the author. Obviously, therefore, I was to be counted lucky if, for the purposes of this book, I should be able to persuade him to give me the benefit of his reminiscences; and it is owing to his kindness and courtesy that I am able to relate, as told to me in his own words, some of his interesting experiences.

"The first 'words for music' I wrote were written for my dear friend Joseph Roeckel, soon

to be followed by work for Molloy and Stephen Adams; and none of my musical friends will be surprised when I speak of those three as my first, dearest and best in my world of music.

"Working for Molloy meant collaboration in the fullest sense, and it was by that collaboration that I learnt my trade. True I wrote the words and he the music, but in most of our work discussion and suggestions always, or almost always, preceded completion.

"I wish there was more of this as far as artistic success is concerned, though of course it took time, and now, after years of practice, discussion is not so necessary. I finish a song, and as I finish it it is set—or rejected as unfit.

"The first song of mine to attract any attention was 'When we are old and grey,' set by Miss Dolby, Madame Sainton as she then was, and from that followed a large number of domestic songs culminating in 'Auntie' (Behrend) and 'Darby and Joan' (Molloy).

"But times change and I have changed with the times, for I have learnt how tastes change also. No more songs of beggar children going to heaven on triplets—no more golden gates. As dear Sterling said to me, 'You've taken them to heaven so often, you must find another place for them!' And now the poor have become so

haughty they are no longer sympathetic subjects for songs.

"And so lately I have turned in another direction, and I have written several rustic songs, humbly endeavouring to copy the old humorous country songs. Examples of this class of song are 'Stone-cracker John' (Eric Coates) and 'Dumbledum Day' (Löhr), the music of which exactly reproduces the style and spirit of the old English folk-song, and with Harry Dearth to sing the one, and Charles Tree the other, the words get their full value. When 'The Bee and the Song' was first produced, of which I wrote both words and music, avowedly as an imitation, my name was omitted from the programme. Said Master Critic in a leading journal, 'Miss Kate Flinn introduced an exquisite old ballad, "The Bee and the Song." Why do not singers unearth more of these gems? Modern composers might do well to note the way the old composers caught the spirit of the words.'

"I have been writing songs for over forty-three years, and no one is more astonished than I at the fact, and at the variety of songs I have written. When I mention a few it will show that my range has been indeed 'from grave to gay, from lively to severe': 'The Children's Home,' 'Darby and Joan,' 'Auntie,' 'Nancy Lee,' 'Midshipmite,' 'Jack's Yarn,' 'They all

Love Jack,' 'Three for Jack,' 'The Holy City,' 'The Star of Bethlehem,' 'The Drum Major,' 'The Sergeant of the Line,' 'Beauty's Eyes,' 'The Last Watch,' 'In Sweet September,' 'Stone-cracker John,' 'Mountain Lovers,' 'Maids of Lee,' 'Old Black Mare,' 'London Bridge,' 'Punchinello,' 'Little Tin Soldier,' 'Old Brigade,' 'Deathless Army,' 'Admiral's Broom,' 'Nini, Ninette, Ninon,' 'I beg your pardon!'

"As a rule I only write for friends, and if they forget sometimes to return rejected verse I forgive them, and send the verses elsewhere. But once on a time I was asked by a publisher to submit some verses to a youth, supposed to be a budding genius. It was no case of pestering a great man with my merchandise unasked. The youth never acknowledged the songs. After waiting a month I humbly asked for their return. He returned them—without even 'his compliments' on a card. Compare this with a letter, written by Gounod, already a great master, to me, then an unknown versifier, who had dared to send him a song!

"'Which is written first—music or words?' is a question frequently put to me. The answer is, 'It depends on circumstances.' The usual and artistic order is words first, and then the music, for the words ought to inspire the music. And in most cases, if they are inspiring, they

TAVISTOCK HOUSE
TAVISTOCK SQUARE.

Mercredi 17 Janv 72.

Monsieur,

Laissez moi vous remercier des délicieuses poésies que vous m'avez fait le plaisir de m'envoyer : — elles ont été droit à mon coeur : je me soumettrai gay à la musique que je me proposerai d'y adapter, de meilleure fortune que de trouver la route qui conduit jusqu'au vôtre.

Merci encore, et croyez moi

Tout à vous

Ch. Gounod

inspire! But it is quite possible that a composer having in his brain 'an unexpressed poem' may make music to it. Then if he can find an author to whom the music has a definite message, and who has also the technical power to adapt words to music, a success may follow as genuine as if the words had been written first. I have written scores of songs in this way, 'Nancy Lee' and 'The Chorister' being the most notable.

"Facility for adapting words to music has brought me a good deal to do in the way of making English versions of foreign operas. Only those who have tried know the difficulty. Though I have never written a sea-song at sea, I wrote my version of the *Siciliana* (*Cavalleria Rusticana*) when shut up in a train in a black fog between Wimbledon and Waterloo. That was my first piece of adaptation of opera, and it was followed by a long spell of work for dear old 'Gus' Harris. The recollection of his friendship, started solely out of the relationship of paymaster and workman, is one of my pleasantest.

"It was for him that I wrote the English versions of *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *L'Amico Fritz*, *L'Attaque du Moulin*, *Amy Robsart*, *Signa;* and with him wrote the original English libretto of Bach's *Lady of Longford*. Once to help him out of a difficulty I rewrote

the libretto of a great social star. Of course my work was done as 'ghost,' and I have sometimes wondered whether the great man recognised his poetry!

"I have written a good many festival cantatas. One recalls a characteristic story. A critic, after the performance of this particular one, said to the composer, 'Your music was excellent, but —the libretto, my dear boy! Weatherly's all very well for songs. Let *me* write your next.' Said the composer, 'Thanks awfully. Weatherly has written my next!' When the next was produced the critic was not so cordial!

"Talking of cantatas reminds me that I wrote one called *Mary Stuart,* based on Swinburne's *Chastelard*, and sent it to the poet for his approval, receiving from him a very kind letter in reply. This, and a letter I received from Mr. Gladstone, acknowledging a copy of my first published volume, *Muriel and Other Poems*, which I had sent him, are amongst my most valued possessions in connection with my literary career.

"It may be strange, but it is true, that of all the many successful songs with which I have been associated scarcely one received recognition at the first performance. Some of them have never been mentioned in a newspaper, and I need scarcely add my name was rarely or never

HOLMWOOD.
SHIPLAKE.
HENLEY ON THAMES.

May 8th

Sir

I have read through with care the libretto which you have done me the honour to submit for my opinion – & think you have made the story entirely your own by the treatment to which you have adapted it for musical purposes. & think the introduction of the sea & bathing scenes very happily conceived.

Yours truly
A. C. Swinburne

11, Carlton-House-Terrace,
S W

March 25. 71

Sir

Having found an early opportunity of reading your 'Ruskin' I cannot refrain myself the pleasure of assuring you, though it must be hastily and I fear abruptly, that it impresses me much with

Feelings with of pleasure
and of admiration
Believe me
Yours very faithfully
and obliged
W. Gladstone

F. E. Weatherley Esq

given. This silent suppression of an author's name is one of the discreditable things of musical criticism, as the men who write criticisms know perfectly well that the words are an essential part—the very foundation—of a song.

"The absurdity to which the custom leads is well illustrated by the following: A very clever parody of my words 'Darby and Joan' appeared in *Punch*. It was headed 'Parody of Molloy's "Darby and Joan."' Now it is quite possible to parody music by means of music, but you can't parody music by words. The compliment was really due to me. Fortunately these things don't worry me now. But they are a cruel injustice to young authors.

"Occasionally I get a letter bearing on the face of it evidence of wealth; as for example the following: 'Dear sir, I have seen some verses of yours in a magazine and have set them to music. May I publish them? I shall be very pleased to send you *a* copy when published.' I replied, 'Dear madam, I cannot live on bread alone.'

"I once received a letter asking me to read and criticise some verses said to be composed by a little girl, the protégée of the writer. They were my own! The child had found them in one of my children's books. Or as I prefer to think,

there was no child in the case at all. I asked the writer of the letter for an appointment, but there was no appearance. Once only have I been accused of plagiarism. I wrote a song for Farkoa, which turned out useless for music, and a year later it appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, unsigned of course. Shortly after its appearance the editor received a letter from an American editor saying that the same poem had been submitted to him by a man named Walker. Walker, on being questioned, had claimed the authorship—it was not a case of coincidence. The poem was either mine or his. I told the two editors that I would supply them with conclusive proof that I was the author, but suggested that as Walker was the claimant, the onus lay on him to prove his case, and that he should be asked to prove the date of his poem. He fixed the date as November, 1907. The poem appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette* in February, 1908. Further, he said he had met me in England, that I was a reciter (!), and that he had given me the poem for recitation. By a strange bit of luck, I had not destroyed the MS. book in which I wrote the poem. There was the poem from its earliest to its final stage. My letter-book and a typewriter's bill proved that I wrote my poem in August, 1906. I have heard no more of Walker. But where should I have been

if I had not preserved (by a mere fluke) the MS. and the typewriter's bill?

"How many songs have I written? Frankly, I don't know. In one ottoman I have fifty-one volumes of eighteen to twenty songs each. But really it is not by numbers ye shall know me. It is the number of 'successful' songs with which I have had to do of which I am proud."

Of the remaining composers of this period, Cowen, German, Tosti, and others, who are still writing songs at the present time, I shall have something to say in a subsequent chapter.[1] For the moment we must turn aside from composers to singers, and take a brief survey of the St. James's Hall ballad concerts, in the days when Sims Reeves, Santley, Lloyd, and Antoinette Sterling were at their zenith.

[1] "Songs of To-day and Yesterday."

CHAPTER X

THE ST. JAMES'S HALL BALLAD CONCERTS

THE old St. James's Hall, the site of which is now occupied by the Piccadilly Hotel, was opened on March 25, 1858, with a concert for the benefit of the Middlesex Hospital, at which the Prince Consort was present.

The first series of concerts instituted at this hall were the Monday "Pops," which were started by Messrs. Chappell in January, 1859. At first the concerts were of a miscellaneous character, the programme consisting of old ballads and instrumental pieces; but later they became the medium for the performance of classical chamber music. In 1865 the Saturday afternoon "Pops" were started and run alternately with the Monday evening concerts, the programmes of both being very similar in character.

Later Mr. John Boosey started his popular ballad concerts, which were continued until the St. James's Hall was demolished. When Mr. William Boosey went to Chappell's, Boosey and Co. moved to the Queen's Hall and gave their

ballad concerts there. As Mr. Tom Chappell was anxious that the St. James's Hall should not be without concerts and suffer by competition (though they still had the "Pops"), he determined to continue giving ballad concerts, and these were run by Mr. William Boosey.

When the St. James's Hall was demolished, Messrs. Chappell took a lease of the Queen's Hall, and for some years both the Boosey and Chappell ballad concerts were given there on alternate Saturdays. Latterly, however, Messrs. Boosey have removed to the Albert Hall, where their series of "Ballads" is still continued, Messrs. Chappell remaining at the Queen's Hall.

It would be impossible to give a list of all the prominent singers who have appeared at these concerts from the date of their inception to the present day. All that I can attempt to do in this chapter is to take a brief glance at some of the famous names which were associated with the St. James's Hall ballad concerts during the period under notice, and more particularly from 1880 to 1890, which were flourishing years for popular music.

Mr. Sterling Mackinlay in his book has given an interesting account of the concerts and singers of this period. Antoinette Sterling, Sainton-Dolby, Sims Reeves, Edward Lloyd, Santley, Foli, Maybrick, Joseph Maas, Barrington-Foote

(with his eyeglass), Mary Davies, Mme. Lemmens-Sherrington, Marie Krebs, Clara Samuell, Gertrude Griswold, Marian McKenzie, Marie Roze, Mme. Trebelli, Mme. Patey, Belle Cole, Alice Gomez ("wearing always Indian costume, which with her dark hair and complexion and rich voice exercised great fascination over audiences"), Clara Novello, Margaret Macintyre, Hilda Wilson, Anna Williams, Liza Lehmann, Evangeline Florence ("advertised," says Mr. Mackinlay, "when she first came to England, as the 'New Eiffel Tower Soprano,' in allusion to her phenomenally high notes") are some of the famous names that float across the mental vision in looking back at the ballad concerts of that day.

At this time Antoinette Sterling was at her zenith. As a ballad singer she has had few, if any, superiors; she brought to her work a conscientiousness and a passionate attention to detail that made her singing of the most trivial song a finished and artistic achievement. "People," she said once, "think ballads are easy to sing. As a matter of fact, they are the most difficult of all music to render with true effect. The ballad is simple in words, melody, and accompaniment. There is nothing to help out the singer. It depends entirely on the power of expression, the intensity, the variety of feeling. There are no orchestra, scenery, romantic cos-

tumes, or gestures. It is a question of art, interpretation, and personality combined."

She always read the words of a new song first. Unless the words pleased her she would not sing the song, however charming. It is a noteworthy fact that Antoinette Sterling sang at every single Boosey ballad concert for twenty consecutive seasons, a record that is probably unique in its way.

Of Sims Reeves there are countless stories told. Mr. Mackinlay gives a neat pen-picture of the famous tenor. "The smiling face, wavy hair parted in the middle, the iron-grey moustache, the frilled shirt, white kid gloves, and neat evening dress. How lightly he would trip on to the platform, amid loud clapping, to sing an encore, a sheet of music in his hands, instead of the book of words which is the more usual substitute nowadays."

Reeves was extremely careful of his voice, and anxious to give the public only of his best. Whenever he felt before a concert the slightest approach of cold or hoarseness he would get into a highly nervous state, which generally culminated in the sending of that long-familiar telegram :—

"Deeply regret a cold prevents my appearing to-night. SIMS REEVES."

His nervousness used to follow him to the concert platform, and he would often regret in the green-room that he had *not* sent the telegram. Sir Charles Santley, in his *Reminiscences*, tells the following story in this connection of an occasion when he was singing with Reeves in the provinces: "I was in the green-room when Reeves came in; he had got a fit of 'nerves'; he said he would give twenty pounds if he could go back to the hotel, for he felt he had no voice, and could not sing a note. I rallied him, and proposed that if he could not sing, he should whistle his songs, as the public would never be satisfied unless at least they saw him. He smiled faintly; I left the room and planted myself in the wings to listen to his first song, Sullivan's 'Meet me once again'; his trousers were positively shaking. The first bar or two sounded as though he had plums in his mouth, but he forgot himself and his dismals, and 'pulled the house down.' His second song was 'The Bay of Biscay,' which produced a storm such as that delightful bay can produce, without the *mal de mer* attendant thereon."

There is one other anecdote of Sims Reeves, as told by Mr. Mackinlay, which is too good not to be quoted here. The occasion was a ballad concert, and the scene was the artists' room at the St. James's Hall. A young tenor was making his first appearance at these concerts, and was in

[*Vandyk.*

MADAME CLARA BUTT.

[*Vandyk.*

MR. KENNERLEY RUMFORD.

(*See pages* 227–233.)

consequence somewhat puffed up with a sense of his own importance. When Reeves strolled into the room, the youthful tenor went up to him and said, "You'd better use the piano on the further side of the platform. You're down for a big song, and the nearer one is tuned up to concert pitch"; to which Reeves, after a gasp of amazement, replied haughtily, "How dare you speak to *me* like that? I shall certainly sing it at the high pitch. I'm not one of your squeezed-up baritones." The entrance of his wife, who had followed him to see that he didn't talk too much, stopped him from saying more, and he departed into the larger room at the back. Just before Reeves's turn to go on, his wife entered and went up to Sidney Naylor, the accompanist, and said in a loud voice, "Mr. Reeves will sing to the high-pitch piano," adding in a whisper, "But please transpose the song down a semitone."

It is a curious fact that Reeves, who, by the way, made his first appearance in public at the age of eighteen as "Mr. Johnson," commenced his career as a baritone, and Santley as a tenor. After Reeves's successful début he received hundreds of letters begging him to take a foreign name, as he would then be likely to get on so much better as a singer!

This was an expedient that was actually adopted by (Signor) Foli, whose actual name was Foley,

and who was an unmistakable Irishman. "He was a tall, powerful man, with long, curly hair, and a deep *basso profundo* voice of extraordinary compass and power," says Mr. Mackinlay. And he relates how Foli during the off-season used to spend his time either fishing and shooting in California, or gambling at Monte Carlo, the latter generally with unfortunate results. "One evening he arrived from one of these outings just in time for a concert engagement in London, and stalked into the artists' room with the remark: 'Sure, Oi've lost every penny Oi have. If it wasn't for what Oi'm making to-night, Oi shouldn't have any at all.'"

Singers who have toured with Foli declare that though somewhat brusque in his manner he was a most delightful companion, and a splendid man to have on tour. Foli and Naylor, the accompanist, used to be always playing tricks of one kind or another. The two were very good friends, and one day when on a provincial tour a good-humoured discussion took place between them as to the standing of accompanists, Foli asserting that they were mere figure-heads who did nothing but sit on a music-stool and twiddle their fingers. Naylor laughed, and bet Foli half a crown that he would upset him in one of his numbers that night. What followed may be

best told in the words of Mr. Mackinlay, who is my authority for the story.

"Foli was singing Cooke's famous duet 'Love and War' with a tenor. During the tenor solo, which was on the subject of love, instead of the soft, rippling music as written, burst out a thunderous accompaniment descriptive of war. The singer finished somehow, with great difficulty preserving his gravity. Then Foli began to bellow forth the terrors of war, when there came from the piano an absurd little pastoral accompaniment in the treble, suggestive of babbling brooks and bleating lambs, with the occasional call of the cuckoo. Foli tried hard to keep grave, but at last had to give up the struggle and walk off the platform roaring with laughter. Naylor won his bet."

Naylor was a very fine accompanist, who could transpose anything at sight into any key, a faculty possessed in an equal degree by another accompanist, Henry Bird. Foli was a singer who called for strenuous efforts on the part of his accompanist, his voice being so extraordinarily broad and deep, and Bird relates how once, when he was accompanying the great basso, the latter turned to him between the verses and in a loud voice said, "Slam it out, Bird, slam it out!"

Though Henry Bird has only recently celebrated the jubilee of his first London concert, he

has been connected with musical matters for quite sixty years, and has met with many amusing and interesting experiences during his long career, some of which he has been good enough to relate to me.

Once at a concert at the Albert Hall a singer, whose name was unfamiliar, was down to sing "The Death of Nelson." In the green-room Bird recognised a well-known amateur, who explained that in future he was going to sing as a professional, and exhibit a higher style of intelligence than was usually shown by the ordinary concert artist. He announced that in the last verse of the song he intended to represent the hero as he really was in his dying hour. Accordingly when he came to the words "In honour's cause my life was passed," he made a long pause between each syllable, accompanied by a sort of gasp. The result was a complete fiasco; the audience were convulsed with laughter, and the singer's professional career ended on the night it began.

In *Punch* of May 4th this year there appeared a reference to Bird's Jubilee Concert, in the form of a poem to "Rara Avis," in which there was an allusion to an incident which is best told in the accompanist's own words:—

"I was engaged," he says, "for a musical party, and one of the singers was to do 'Come

into the Garden, Maud' in the first part of the programme; the music had been arranged by a well-known artist who did not know this particular singer, but the host of the party had requested he should have an appearance on account of a friend's recommendation. The singer arrived late, and it was evident that he had been dining; however, I commenced the symphony, but before it was finished the singer began in a different key. I followed him till we got to the end of the first verse; then he started off 'Queen rose' in an entirely new key, so again I had to follow him; and we had even a third digression before we came to a miserable termination. He was then politely informed that his second song would not be required. Corney Grain was seated near the piano awaiting his number in the concert, and he and everyone was amazed at the exhibition."

One of the oldest recollections in the storehouse of Bird's memory is that of a private concert at a house in Mayfair, on a certain Monday evening after a "Pop." Among the "turns" were Joachim and Chirgwin the White-eyed Kaffir. Some of the guests wanted the latter to do a special hornpipe, and Bird was asked to accompany him on the piano. To accompany Joachim and Chirgwin in one evening is somewhat of a record, and Bird had to put

up with a good deal of chaff on the subject afterwards.

Of the humours of transposition he has several stories to tell. One of these had to do with a well-known lady singer, who asked him whether he would be kind enough to put the song down for her. "Certainly," said Bird. "What key shall I play it in?" "Key?" answered the singer. "Oh, I don't know anything about keys." Then, turning to a friend, she asked plaintively, "What key *do* I sing it in, my dear?"

This recalls the story told by Sir Charles Hallé, who when asked by a singer, equally ignorant of keys, to transpose a song lower, inquired blandly, "About an octave, I suppose?" "Oh, yes, I should think that will do," replied the vocalist cheerfully.

Talking of transposition reminds me of yet another story, in relation to Tito Mattei, which is told by Sir Charles Santley in his *Reminiscences*:—

"At a concert in the provinces a celebrated lady singer, being called upon for an encore, handed a ragged, dirty copy of a Scotch ballad to the accompanist, Tito Mattei, requesting him to play it in G flat—the copy was in D natural. Mattei demurred at first, but gave way and played the transposed accompaniment perfectly.

Half-way through the lady stopped—she could not reach the lower notes. There was a G flat in the key, and she took it for granted that must be the keynote. She wanted it in D flat!"

The lot of an accompanist is not always a happy one, as the following instances will show. On one occasion a song was put into Bird's hands for an encore, and he was asked to transpose it down a tone. There were two flats in the signature, and at the commencement was written "play in A flat." Fortunately, it dawned upon him while walking to the piano that the song was in G minor, so that, of course, the true transposition was into F minor. On another occasion, when Bird was accompanying Santley in "The Erl King," the latter was encored, and decided to repeat the song. "Luckily," says Bird, in recalling the incident, "he did not take it as fast as Plunket Greene, but it was very hard to play it through twice running."

Two more little stories Bird has to tell are worth repeating. The first is as follows:—

"I was accompanying at a large town in the provinces, when the singer got his words mixed up, and began, 'Oh that we two were maying, Under the churchyard sod.' There was a shout of amusement from the audience, which necessitated a stop and a fresh start."

Here is the other:—

"I was once in Dublin, and was taken by a friend to have some oysters at a celebrated shop. We had been told that the daughter of the proprietor was musical and sang, so my friend inquired after her. The father said she had gone to Milan to study, and he had recently received a report that her voice was excellent, and that she had two more notes than Patti." "Indeed," said my friend, "I congratulate you! When she comes out you must call her 'the Oyster Patti!'"

Of Edward Lloyd Mr. Mackinlay says that he was "not only a brilliant vocalist, but a clever man of business. He was wise enough to lay by a large portion of his income. Consequently he found himself in the happy position of being able to retire when at the full zenith of his powers, before anyone could declare that he was beginning to lose his voice."

Lloyd's "Farewell" concert formed the occasion for a remarkable demonstration. The following is culled from an account by Sforzando, which appeared in the *Morning Leader* the next morning: "After Mr. Lloyd had sung 'When other lips' as an encore, the final line 'And you'll remember me' was the signal for a burst of applause from the immense audience. Mr. Lloyd returned to the platform again and again. Handkerchiefs were waved, and the singer was pre-

[*Dupont.*

MR. BEN DAVIES.

[*Barnett.*

MADAME ADA CROSSLEY.

(*See pages* 233-236.)

sented with a huge laurel wreath—the second during the afternoon. Still the audience applauded, and Mr. Lloyd was bowing right and left, evidently much moved. Suddenly Mr. Ganz rushed to the piano and played something. Then Madame Albani's voice, singing 'For he's a jolly good fellow,' pierced through the cheering, and we all joined in. Once more Mr. Lloyd bowed and retired. But the clapping continued, until he was almost pushed on to the platform again. Madame Albani seized Mr. Lloyd's right hand, and Miss Butt his left, and led him forward, the other artists forming a ring, and then all the singers began 'Auld Lang Syne.'"

At the time when the artists mentioned above were delighting large audiences at the St. James's Hall, one or two other names, all well known and famous to-day, were just coming to the front. To quote Mr. Mackinlay once more: "Plunket Greene was just at the beginning of his career, Clara Butt had not yet made her début; Ada Crossley was still in Australia, and Ben Davies was being spoken of as a 'young singer who was making rapid strides, and showing great powers of expression.'"

These, then, were some of the singers who came after. It is hard to believe, even though I have had it from his own lips, that Ben Davies at the outset of his career could get no concert work at

all, in spite of his strenuous endeavours to obtain a hearing, and of the fact that he was already well known on the operatic stage. It was his appearance in *Dorothy*, in which he created quite a sensation, which led to his being approached by Mr. John Boosey, who asked him to sing at the St. James's Hall Ballad Concerts. He sang there for two seasons, but owing to the fact that they already had their regular tenor in the person of Edward Lloyd, Ben Davies, when Mr. William Boosey went over to Chappell's and started the Chappell Ballad Concerts, went with him, and has sung at these concerts during every subsequent season up to last year.

Some of the amusing stories told by this genial and popular singer have already been quoted in various chapters of this book, and mention made of those old ballads with which his name is so intimately associated.

Of modern songs Franco Leoni's "In Sympathy" has been a great favourite of his, and, still more recently, Frank Tours's "Mother o' Mine." This song had been lying at Chappell's for some years and doing nothing, till one day Mr. William Boosey asked Ben Davies to look at it, as he thought it would suit him. When produced by him at a ballad concert the song was a great success, and has held its place in this singer's répertoire ever since. The words are by Rudyard

Kipling, and there was a little doubt in the minds of both publisher and singer as to how the public would take the word "dammed" when declaimed in a song. However, as it turned out, it took it "smiling," so to speak. The fear of one word in the lyric upsetting the success of a song is not so far-fetched as it may seem, but of this another story later on.

For Maude Valerie White's beautiful song "To Mary" ("Oh, Mary dear, that you were here!") Ben Davies retains a very affectionate regard. He relates how once, when singing it to the late Queen Victoria, she expressed her delight, and asked why she had never heard him sing it before. He replied that though he had often included it on the list of songs submitted, it happened never to have been amongst those chosen. On every future occasion when he appeared before her "To Mary" was always asked for with unfailing regularity.

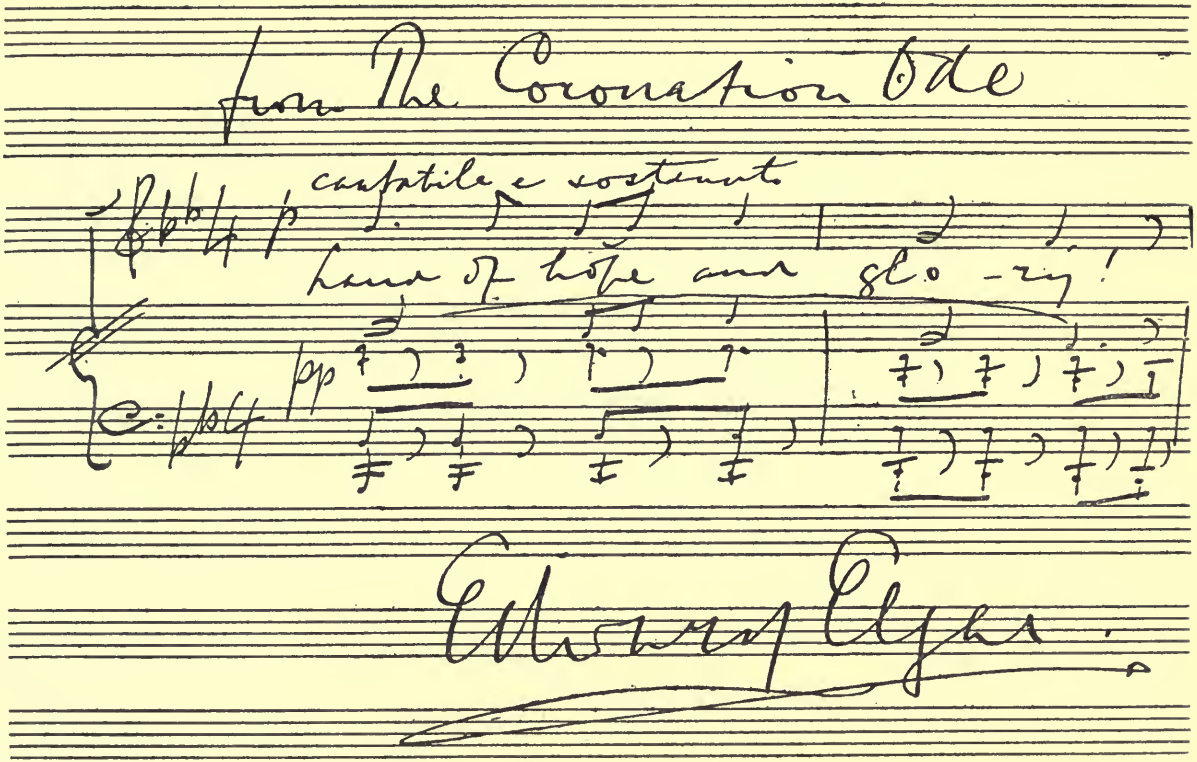
In speaking of the concerts and singers of this period, a gentleman who has been closely connected with the management of ballad concerts for many years said to me recently: "Sims Reeves was the biggest attraction who ever sang at a ballad concert; and there is no one who can be compared to him in that respect except Clara Butt, who has the same magnetic power of drawing the public."

This is a verdict that probably no one will be found to dispute. Since she made her début in 1892, appearing in Gluck's *Orfeo* and as Ursula in *The Golden Legend* within the same week, Clara Butt has won her way to a very warm place in the hearts of the public.

"To hear Madame Butt sing," said a well-known critic nine years ago, "is to learn in a moment what a god-like gift the power of song is! With her there is none of that too often apparent striving for effect; when she sings, she sings naturally, which, in her case, is consummate art, the art of phrasing, perfect enunciation, light and shade, the marvellous transition from one mood to another, so that the rendition of the simplest ballad by her at once holds her hearers spellbound by the artistic wealth with which she illuminates it."

Of her singing of "Kathleen Mavourneen" mention has already been made in another chapter. Of more modern popular ballads Cowen's "Promise of Life," Edward Murray's "The Nights," Chaminade's "The Little Silver Ring," Joan Trevalsa's "My Treasure," Franco Leoni's "Leaves and the Wind," Frances Allitsen's "There's a Land," and S. Liddle's setting of "Abide with Me" have been amongst those which she has made essentially her own.

Her delightful singing of classical German


from The Coronation Ode
cantabile e sostenuto
pp
hour of hope and glo - ry!
Edward Elgar.

songs, such as "Du bist die Ruh," "Ich Grolle Nicht," and the songs of Brahms, is outside the scope of this book, but the "Sea Pictures" of Sir Edward Elgar, which he wrote specially for her for the Norwich Festival of 1896, of which "Sabbath Morning" and "Where Corals Lie" are probably her favourites, and the same composer's "Land of Hope and Glory" must be reckoned among her greatest artistic triumphs. "Land of Hope and Glory," as is well known, originally formed part of the "Coronation Ode" written by A. C. Benson, and was afterwards expanded into its present form as a song.

With the name of Clara Butt is inseparably associated that of Kennerley Rumford, to whom she was married in 1900. Their first joint concert after their marriage was given in October of that year. It is interesting to note that Kennerley Rumford narrowly escaped first going into business, and then into the army. Luckily, in spite of parental opposition, he persisted in his choice of a musical career, and studied under Sbriglia, Henschel, Blumé, and Tosti.

Among modern English songs that are especial favourites of his are Maude Valerie White's "Three Little Songs" and "King Charles," Clutsam's "Songs from the Turkish Hills," which he brought out at a concert at Hudders-

field; Hermann Löhr's "Songs of the Norseland," produced at a Butt-Rumford concert at the Albert Hall; and in lighter vein "The Old Grey Fox" (M. V. White) and Squire's "Three for Jack." His singing of the "Four Serious Songs" of Brahms, and other classical songs, hardly comes under the heading of this book.

Rumford relates an amusing experience he had once at a concert up north. Somehow or other his luggage had got lost *en route*, and he had no other clothes to appear in. However, the violoncellist of the evening, who happened to be something near Rumford's size, offered to help him out of the difficulty, and the two accordingly played the parts of "quick-change artists," each appearing in the same dress suit alternately!

One other little story that Rumford tells bears a sentimental interest. "Whilst living at Birkenhead," he says, "I was in London on a visit, and having half an hour to spare, turned into St. James's Hall. Before hurrying to the station I had only time to hear two items on the programme—one a song by Plunket Greene, who became one of my dearest friends, and the other 'Kathleen Mavourneen,' by the lady who is now my wife."

Public singers are often inundated with requests for autographs, but these are not always so amusing as the following effusion, which was

recently sent to Clara Butt by a youthful admirer :—

Of autographs of those of fame
I've gathered not a few :
But one illustrious name I miss,
And, madam, that is you.

So kindly send one little line,
A schoolboy's heart to cheer,
And make his autographic book
A thousand times more dear.

And as we cannot see what Time
May have for us in store,
And I may be Lord Chancellor
(Or even something more),
When that ever takes place I'll see
That you shall have a line from me !

Both Clara Butt and her husband were the recipients of frequent "commands" from the late Queen Victoria, though, curiously enough, never at one and the same time. One of Rumford's most cherished possessions is a copy of *Leaves from our Journal in the Highlands*, with an inscription in Queen Victoria's own handwriting.

Talking of royal commands, Henry Bird tells of one in relation with Ada Crossley which was a very rapid affair indeed. At half-past ten one morning the famous contralto received a summons to appear before Queen Alexandra at half-past four that same afternoon. She wired to

Bird, but, as luck would have it, he was away from home at a friend's house, and the first intimation he received was on the arrival of his wife in a cab with the news that he must get ready at once to go to the Palace.

Ada Crossley came to England at the age of twenty, and studied with Sir Charles Santley and Madame Marchesi, having previously received lessons from Madame Fanny Simonson in Melbourne. She is, of course, Australian born, and on her recent tour in her native land she met with an enthusiastic reception from her fellow-countrymen and women. She was particularly touched by her welcome at Yarram, close by Tarraville, her birthplace, where the school-children strewed her path with roses and greeted her with "Home, Sweet Home."

One of her mementoes of a previous tour in Australia is a lyre-bird in diamonds, presented to her by the musicians of Victoria; and another, a quaint little shovel, with a piece of gold quartz on it, and the Australian arms done in gold and precious stones, bearing an inscription "To Ada Crossley, from the Women of Sale, North Gippsland." In New Zealand an equally warm reception awaited her. Among the enthusiastic group of admirers was an old Maori, who, refusing a flower from her bouquet, demanded one from

her hat, saying, "The real ones will fade, the other won't, that's why I want it."

An incident that happened in this country was less amusing at the time than it appears on looking back on it. The singer had just returned from a wedding, and found an anxious concert agent awaiting her. He told her that one of his "stars" had failed him for a concert at Manchester that night; would Madame Crossley go in her stead? She consented, and travelled to Manchester that afternoon, only to find that there was no concert of any kind taking place. The next morning, on her return to London, an exceedingly apologetic agent called, and explained that he had meant Birmingham and not Manchester!

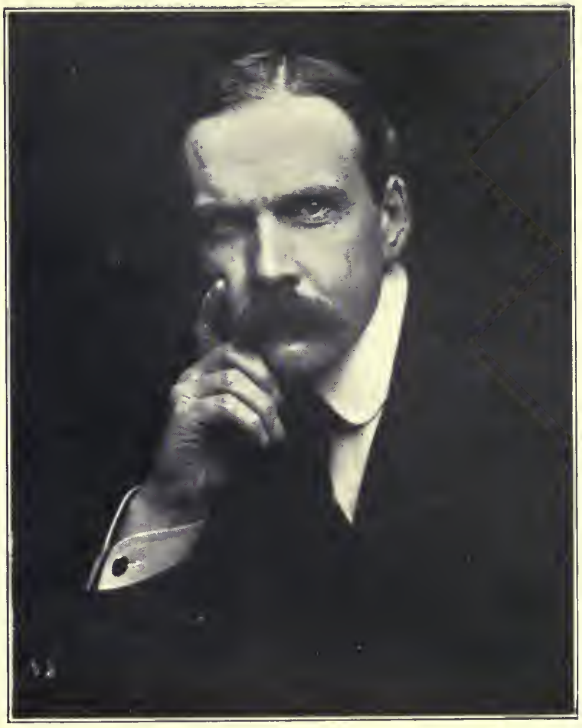
Among Ada Crossley's favourite songs, outside her classical répertoire, may be mentioned Cuthbert Wynne's "Through Love to Light," G. H. Clutsam's "Life's Gifts," Ethelbert Nevin's "O that we two were maying" and "Mighty like a rose," Edward German's "Love the Pedlar," S. Liddle's "Christmas Bells" and *The Way Home* (a miniature song-cycle), Lewis Carey's "Nearer, my God, to Thee," Walford Davies's "Hame," and the songs of Albert Mallinson.

Apropos of Ada Crossley the following amusing little paragraph from *Punch* is worth quoting:—

"Amongst the most richly endowed débutantes of the season is Miss Southern Crossley, an Antipodean contralto, whose organ has the luscious richness of a Carlsbad plum combined with the translucent purity of rock crystal!"

[*Histed.*

SIR CHARLES STANFORD.



[*Histed.*

MR. PLUNKET GREENE.

CHAPTER XI

PLUNKET GREENE AND STANFORD'S IRISH SONGS

THIS chapter is perhaps, as far as the scope of this book is concerned, somewhat of a digression, but one that needs no apology from me. The name of Plunket Greene stands high among modern interpreters of song, and his close identification with the traditional Irish song, though forming only one type of his many-sided art, must be my excuse for the title I have placed at the head of the chapter.

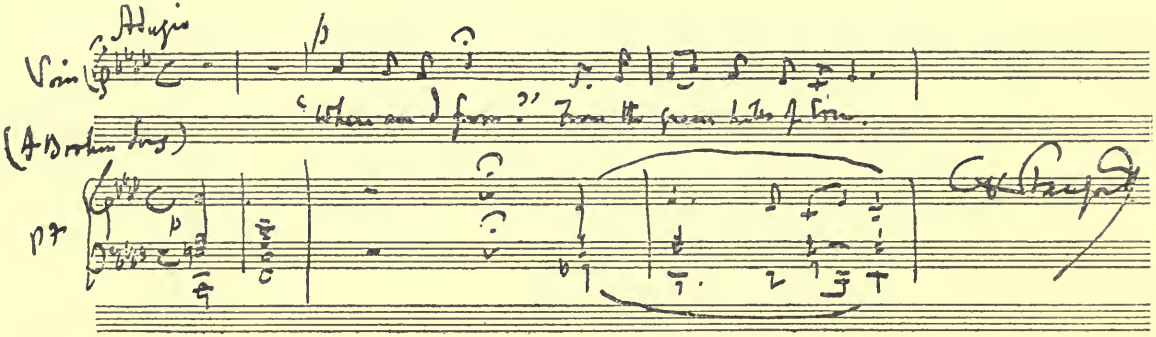
The association of the two names mentioned above is a very close one. Of the long list of traditional Irish melodies arranged by Sir Charles Stanford, of which only a few can be mentioned here, "Father O'Flynn" is possibly the most famous from a "popular" point of view. Speaking of "Father O'Flynn," Plunket Greene once said that Sir Charles Santley was the only English singer he knew who has tackled an Irish song as an Irishman. "And," he added parenthetically, "if at the present day a ballad-singer wants to know how an English song should be sung, both

in phrasing and in spirit, he should miss no opportunity of hearing Santley sing."

"Trottin' to the Fair," another traditional Irish melody arranged by Stanford, is a song that Plunket Greene has made almost entirely his own. "It is a common idea," he says, "that a humorous song is on a lower scale than a tragic or a sentimental one. Both types have their appointed place in art, and are equally worth doing, and at the same time equally difficult to do well. A song can be light and amusing and meant to laugh at, and yet superlatively good. "Trottin' to the Fair" is just as much a masterpiece in its own line as Schubert's "Doppelgänger."

Other of Stanford's traditional airs that may be mentioned are the fine "Battle Hymn," "O ye dead," "Quick, we have but a second," "My Love's an Arbutus," "Little Red Lark," "Molly Brannigan," "The Flight of the Earls," "Emer's Farewell," and his splendid settings of the Moore melodies.

Of Stanford's original Irish songs his *Irish Idyll* and *Cushendall*, both song-cycles, stand out as illustrations of what a modern Irish song should be. One number of the former, "The Fairy Lough," is, in Plunket Greene's opinion, perhaps the most beautiful song in the English language. The words, by Moira


Adagio
Vln
(Adrian sing)
"Whom am I from?" From the green hills of Erin.
pp

O'Neill, are haunting in themselves, even apart from the music.

To hear Plunket Greene sing this song is a revelation. He himself cites it as a perfect example of the true relation of the voice and the so-called accompaniment. In this song the voice gives the atmosphere, and the piano part supplies the illustration. "The little waves running up the shore and retreating, the call of the curlew, the rustling of the reeds, the water whispering over the stones, the fairy horsemen, all these find vivid illustration in the accompaniment, while the repetition of the words 'Lough-areema' at the end, dying away to nothing, leaves you with a sense of utter remoteness." Other songs from the *Irish Idyll* are "Cuttin' Rushes," "Johneen," and "A Broken Song."

Plunket Greene's enthusiasm for the song-cycle *Cushendall* is equally great. "The third number, 'Cushendall,'" he says, "for pure melodic beauty, and the fifth, 'Daddy Long-legs,' for sheer fun, would be hard to beat."

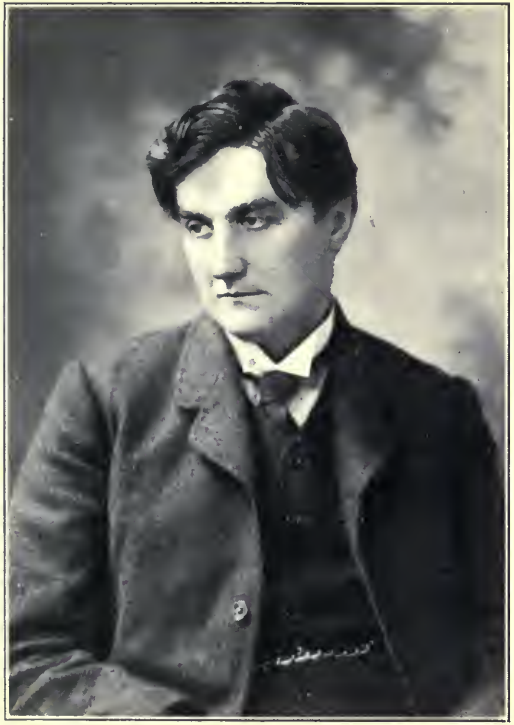
Of Stanford's other songs, apart from his Irish songs, the *Songs of the Sea*, which include "Homeward Bound," "Drake's Drum," and "The Old Superb," are characteristic examples, and to these may be added his settings of Browning's *Three Cavalier Songs*.

To hark back to the subject of traditional Irish

songs for a moment, the work of other composers in this direction must not be forgotten. Such are Hamilton Harty's "My Lagan Love" and "Black Sheela of the Silver Eye," Hubert Hughes's "The Ninepenny Fidil" and his collected settings of North of Ireland songs, Arthur Somervell's "The Little Red Fox," "The Gentle Maiden," and many others, and Charles Wood's "Over here," "The Jug of Punch," and his collection of arrangements of *Traditional Irish Airs*. In this connection a tribute must be paid to the work of Alfred Perceval Graves as a lyric-writer who is associated with nearly all the arrangements of traditional Irish songs.

To "Off to Philadelphia," which may be said to have started the vogue for the Irish song, there is something of a history attached. The melody was taken down from an old woman in County Cork by Plunket Greene's cousin, G. Fitzgerald Penrose, himself an admirable musician. He sent it to Greene, who showed it to Battison Haynes, and the latter arranged it, adding an excellent accompaniment. The words were written by another cousin of Plunket Greene's, Herbert Greene, at present Vice-President of Magdalen College, Oxford.

In a letter I received recently from Plunket Greene on the subject of Irish songs, he mentions



[*Scott & Wilkinson.*

DR. R. VAUGHAN WILLIAMS.

[*Histed.*

SIR EDWARD ELGAR.

incidentally the names of some other composers with whose work he has closely associated himself; and I do not think I can do better than quote his actual words :—

"I trust that you will bear in mind that the old Irish and folk-song generally is only a type —a groove of its own—in the world of song, and that the thoughts of the young singer should be turned with gratitude to the great modern song-writers of our own language—Parry, Stanford, Walford Davies, Charles Wood, Arthur Somervell, Roger Quilter, Ernest Walker, Vaughan Williams, and all the other men who have kept up a noble standard and never dropped it."

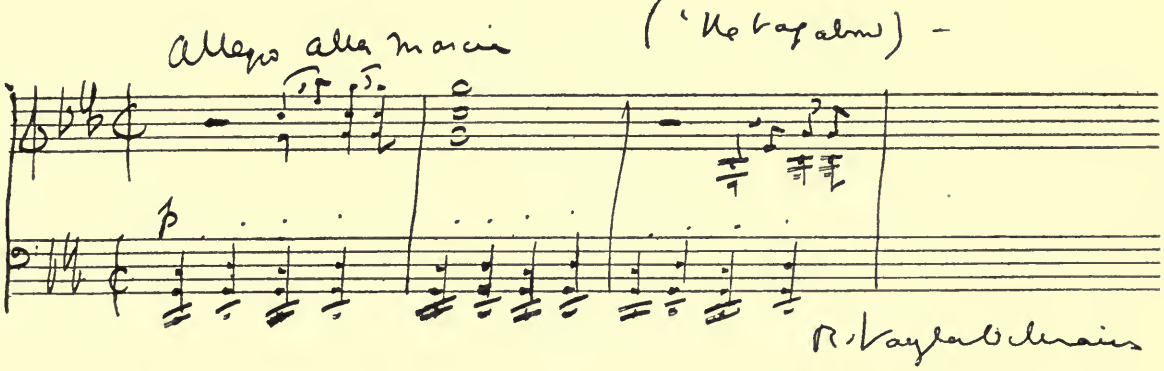
Of Sir Hubert Parry's songs he especially mentions "Through the Ivory Gate," "Nightfall in Winter," and, for lightness of touch and delightful humour, "Follow a shadow" and "The Laird of Cockpen." Parry's beautiful settings of Elizabethan lyrics are also, of course, well known.

Walford Davies's "When Childher Plays," "Sweet Content," "Manhood," and "Tap o' th' Hill"; Charles Wood's "Ethiopia saluting the colours," "O Captain, my Captain," and all his settings of Walt Whitman; Arthur Somervell's *Maud* cycle, Roger Quilter's Shakespeare songs, and his settings of Herrick, for which he has found so admirable and sympathetic an interpreter

in Gervase Elwes; "Corinna's going a-maying," by Ernest Walker, and Vaughan Williams's "Silent Noon" and his settings of R. L. Stevenson's *Songs of Travel* which include "The Roadside Fire" and "The Vagabond," are all songs that may be included here.

To these may be added the songs of Sir Edward Elgar, Sir Alexander Mackenzie, and of Coleridge-Taylor; and also Hamilton Harty's "Sea Wrack" and "Bonfires," so admirably sung by Agnes Nicholls, and produced by her at the Norwich Festival.

No reference to Plunket Greene would be complete without a mention of Korbay's Hungarian songs. They were first sung by him at a concert of the Magpie Madrigal Society, when he was accompanied by Henry Bird, and the latter always considers that he owed his engagement as accompanist at the Chappell Ballad Concerts to these songs. "Amongst those with whose early career I was associated," he says, "was Plunket Greene. When this singer decided to sing Korbay's Hungarian songs at the 'Pops' I was asked to be his accompanist. The songs and the singer alike made an instantaneous success, and, as a result, Mr. Arthur Chappell invited me to become the permanent accompanist at his concerts."

The way in which Plunket Greene was first

Allegro alla marcia
('Ne vagabond)
p
R. Vaughan Williams

introduced to these Hungarian songs is somewhat amusing. They had been sent to him to look at, and he propped them up on the dressing-table one morning while shaving, and was casually glancing through them. He had shaved half his face when he came upon "Mohac's Field," and was so overcome by excitement that he forgot to finish the operation till after breakfast!

At the conclusion of his letter to me, before referred to, Plunket Greene pays the following little tribute to Mr. Arthur Boosey, which, by the writer's express desire, I will quote here. "I have," he says, "been treated with the utmost kindness by Arthur Boosey with regard to choice of songs for him. He never in his life pressed me to do anything I didn't care about, and I appreciate it deeply."

CHAPTER XII

SONGS OF TO-DAY AND YESTERDAY

AS already foreshadowed in a former chapter, the "Songs of To-day and Yesterday" will be found to refer chiefly to some further composers of the Sullivan era, who are still actively engaged in song-writing to-day.

The first names that occur to the mind are those of two composers with whom the writing of ballads holds only an incidental place, and who are known chiefly by their orchestral or choral works—Dr. Cowen and Edward German; but it is with their songs only, of course, that I have to deal here.

Probably the three most famous of Cowen's "popular" ballads are "The Better Land," "The Children's Home," and "The Promise of Life." The words of "The Better Land," which are by Mrs. Hemans, were brought to Cowen by Antoinette Sterling, with a request that he would set them. He took them away with him to the Isle of Wight, and one wet afternoon took them out and read them through. All at once the melody came to him, and the whole song was

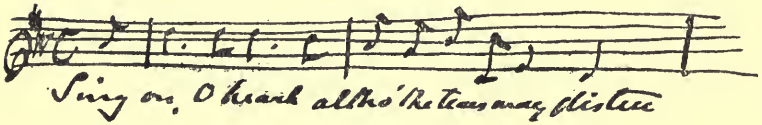
finished within an hour. Antoinette Sterling was so pleased that she wanted to purchase it, but he eventually sold it to the publishers outright, without a royalty!

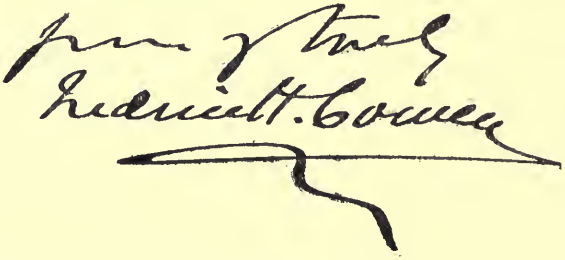
After "The Better Land" had been out for some time Cowen received an amusing letter from a man who was unknown to him, saying that it was one of the finest songs ever written, both as regards words and music, and was rendered even more so by Antoinette Sterling's perfect interpretation of it. Would he (Cowen) set some of the writer's lyrics enclosed in the letter, which ended with the expression of a hope that they four (Cowen, Mrs. Hemans, Sterling, and the writer) would all meet one day in "The Better Land," where they could go on writing and singing beautiful songs between them.

"The Children's Home," the words of which are by Weatherly, had almost as great a vogue as "The Better Land." It represented a type of ballad which was very popular at that time, and though tastes have changed considerably since then the song is by no means forgotten to-day.

To "The Promise of Life" there is rather a quaint story attached, in view of what the song has done since. Cowen wrote it for a firm who objected to it on the grounds that it was too difficult and not popular enough, and asked him

to revise it. This he refused to do, and though they were under a contract to publish the song, he offered to release them if they would assign him the copyright of the words. This they did, and he immediately took it to Messrs. Boosey, who agreed to publish it at once, with the result that it sold something like fifty thousand copies in the first year!





"The Promise of Life" was probably one of the most successful lyrics that Clifton Bingham ever wrote, and that is saying a good deal, if one remembers the enormous number of other popular songs with which his name is associated. How small a share the lyric-writer sometimes gets of the credit is illustrated by a little anecdote that Bingham tells. A famous singer had just rendered the song with great éclat, and Bingham congratulated him, remarking how pleasant it

was to hear one's own words so well sung. "Are they *your* words?" the singer asked him with astonishment. "Why, I've sung that song hundreds of times, but I've never looked to see whom the words were by!" Of this another and more personal story later on.

"It was a dream," though a song of a different type, has in its own way enjoyed almost as great a popularity as the ballads mentioned above. It was written, says Cowen, at the age of eighteen, especially for Titiens, who sang it with immense success. Other popular songs of this composer's are "The Swallow," "In the Chimney Corner," and more recently the famous "Border Ballad" and a setting of Rossetti's "A Birthday."

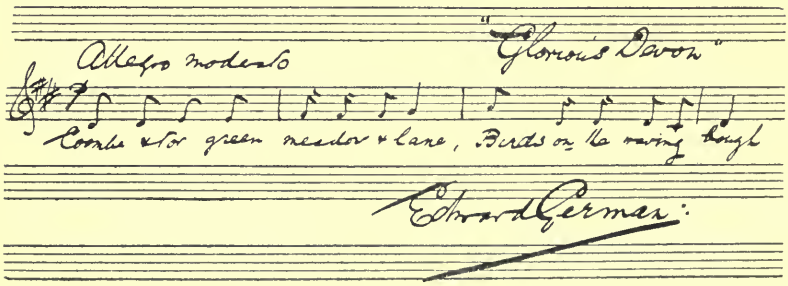
Of "Love can never die," one of his earlier songs, there is a characteristic little paragraph in *Musical Jottings*, under date of January, 1879 :—

"'Love can never die,' new song by Frederic Cowen, is very fair indeed, and is the best song he has written since 'It was a dream.' The poetry is by F. E. Weatherly, who seems the only poet the first composers care to notice just now."

Edward German may be looked upon as the legitimate successor to Sir Arthur Sullivan in the sphere of light opera ; and, as will be remembered, he was called upon, after the latter's death, to

complete the score of "The Emerald Isle." Many of his most popular songs are originally to be found in his various operas. Of these may be mentioned "The Yeomen of England" and "Love is meant to make us glad," the latter originally written as a quintet, from *Merrie England*, "O peaceful England," from the same opera, "Four Jolly Sailormen" (originally a quartet) from *A Princess of Kensington*, and "When a Knight loves Ladye," from *Fallen Fairies*.

Of his separate songs outside his operas undoubtedly one of the most popular is "Glorious Devon," the words of which, as already mentioned in a previous chapter, were written by Harold Boulton. This song had, I believe, been published for some time in a set of Three Baritone Songs, without attracting much attention. But it was unearthed one day by a singer, who was delighted with his find, with the result that it speedily became one of the most popular baritone songs of the day.



[*Bridgman & Robbins.*

MR. HERMANN LÖHR.

[*Dover Street Studios.*

MR. HERBERT BUNNING.

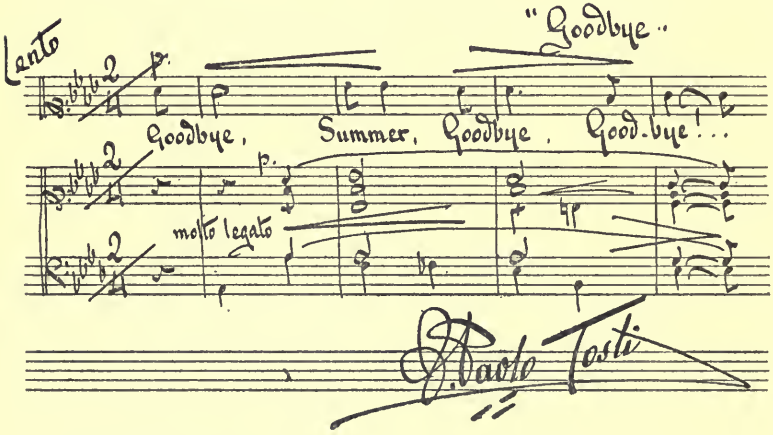
(*See pages* 291-295.)

Other popular songs by this composer are "Love the Pedlar," "Daffodils a-blowing," "Cupid at the Ferry," and "Who'll buy my lavender?" while his delightful *Album of Four Lyrics* (words by Harold Boulton) must not be forgotten.

The name of Sir F. Paolo Tosti is associated with a number of songs that have enjoyed a long and enduring spell of popularity. I refer, of course, chiefly to his English songs, as it is by these that he is best known to the big music-loving public.

It is over thirty years since Tosti first came to England, and the number of famous singers who have been pupils of his would be difficult to calculate. It may not be generally known that he has not only had the honour of giving lessons to our present Queen, but also of singing duets with Queen Alexandra and the late Queen Victoria.

One of the first of Tosti's Italian songs, published before his arrival in England, was "Ti rapirei," written at the age of twenty-three. Twelve years later he wrote "Good-bye," a song which will perhaps endure the longest of all his English songs. The absolute harmony of words and music in this song is one of the features that have contributed to its success, and in this connection I may quote a remark once made to me by

Weatherly, in speaking of accent: "Oddly enough one of the few composers who have never made a mistake with his accents is a foreigner—Tosti. He not only never makes a mistake, but he always gives the proper musical emphasis to the right words." The lyric in this case was written by G. Whyte-Melville, and it is somewhat incongruous to note that he was also the author of "Drink, Puppy, Drink," "Wrap me up in my Tarpaulin Jacket," and a long list of sporting novels.

Next in popularity to "Good-bye" may be reckoned "For ever and for ever," "Beauty's Eyes," and the "Venetian Boat Song." Other English songs of this composer's which may be mentioned are "My Dreams," "Parted," and "My Memories." In connection with the last-

named Tosti tells an amusing little story of feminine persistence.

It was during one of his busiest mornings, with a long list of singing lessons to be got through, that a knock came at the door of Tosti's flat. His valet was ill, and so Tosti went to the door himself. A lady, a stranger to him, stood on the threshold.

"Signor Tosti?" she inquired.

Tosti bowed.

"Oh," said the lady, "I am singing your song 'My Memories' at Manchester to-night, and I want you to kindly run through it with me."

"Madam," answered Tosti, politely but firmly, "I fear it is impossible. I have two pupils with me now, and a third is waiting in the ante-room; while others will shortly be arriving."

"But you must!" the lady persisted.

"I am sorry——" began Tosti again, when he suddenly received a violent push backwards and the lady walked into the studio.

Tosti followed, protesting. After a long argument, which threatened every moment to become heated, the lady snapped out—

"Very well, I shan't sing your song then!"

"Madam," said Tosti, taking her by the hand, "I am infinitely obliged to you."

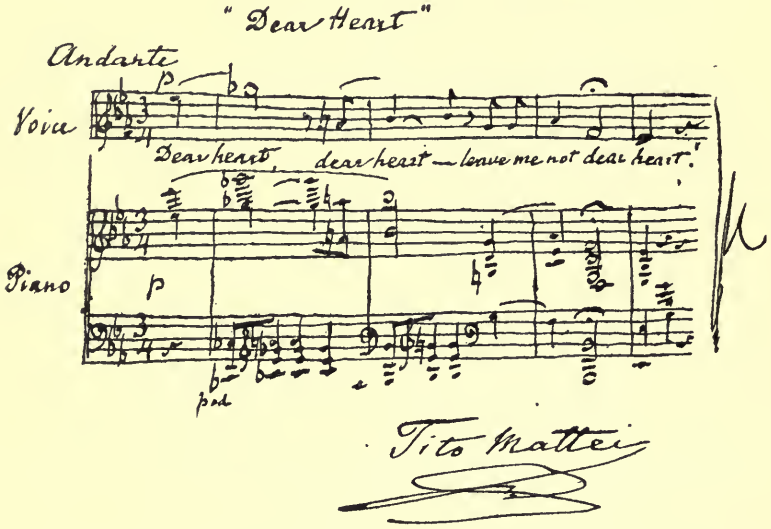
The lady gave one look at him and fled.

Of Tosti's Italian songs, "La Serenata" and

"Mattinata," and of his French songs, "Ninon," "Chanson de l'adieu," and "Pour un baiser," have all become great favourites in this country. To his list of English songs has quite recently been added "Once More," his latest song, written at the age of sixty-four!

Another Italian song which has had enormous success in this country is Tito Mattei's "Non è ver." Published nearly fifteen years ago, it is still being sung to-day, not only in the original Italian, but in English, German, French, Russian, and Spanish. The words were written by Signor Caravoglia, the famous operatic baritone. One morning he arrived at the Hotel Prévitali in London, where Mattei was staying, and found the composer in bed. "Get up, you lazy fellow," said he; "I want you to write me a song. I've got the words here." Mattei protested sleepily at being disturbed, but on hearing the title of the song, "Non è ver," he was so struck with it that he got up. In an hour the music was finished, Caravoglia sang it through, and together they went off to Hutchings and Romer, the publishers, who were immensely pleased with it, and eventually published it. There are probably few songs of modern times of which more copies have been sold than of "Non è ver."

Of Mattei's English songs two of the most popular have been "Oh, oh, hear the wild wind

blow," written at Margate during a storm especially for Foli (the words being by Madame Foli), and "Dear Heart," words by Clifton Bingham.

Other popular successes of Mattei's include "Bianca" (written in the train between Hull and London), "For the sake of the past," "Leave me not," "White Moon," and "No, no, no!"

Among other composers of what may be called the "Italian School" of English song-writers must be mentioned Franco Leoni, whose popular song "In Sympathy" has already been referred to in connection with Ben Davies. Other popular songs by this composer are "When he comes home," "Song of the Cruise," "A Little Prayer,"

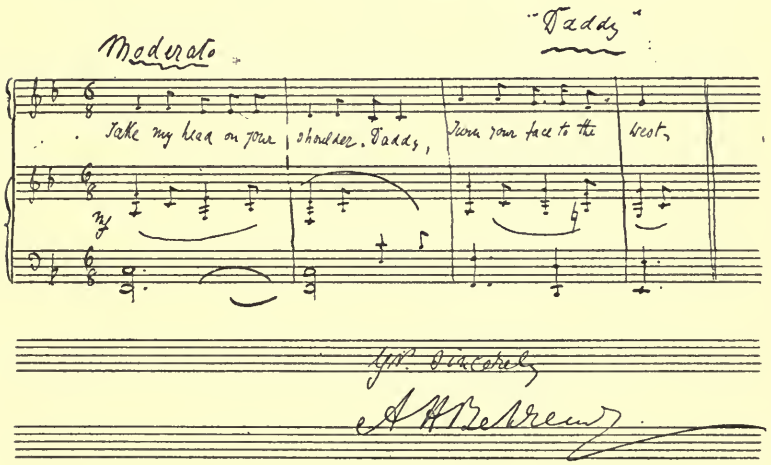
"'Specially Jim," "The Birth of Morn," and the song-cycle *Fairy Dreams*. Mention must also be made of Luigi Denza, the composer of "Funiculi, Funicula," "A May morning," and a number of other successful songs; of Edgardo Lévi, composer of "When thou art sad" and "Last night I dreamt"; and of Napoleone Zardo's "Paquita," "Happy Bird," and "A June Rose."

A composer whose earliest successes date back a considerable number of years is A. H. Behrend, a grandson of Balfe, from whom, no doubt, he inherited his gift of melody. One of the first of these was his setting of Hood's "Song of the Shirt," which was sung a great deal by Antoinette Sterling. This was seized upon by our critic in *Musical Jottings*, who wrote :—

"'Song of the Shirt,' by Behrens [*sic*], sung by Antoinette Sterling. We don't like it, and therefore must leave it to its fate."

Behrend's next popular success was "Auntie," a lyric by Weatherly, which he was very near not setting at all. He had tried several times without success, until one day he got a letter from the author to say that Molloy wanted to set it. Behrend asked for another week's grace, during which time he set it and took it to Madame Patey, who liked it so much that she bought it on her own responsibility for the firm of Patey and Willis,

in which her husband was a partner. Weatherly relates that when Patey sang it at the Crystal Palace, where she created quite a furore with it, one of the critics wrote that it was a disgrace to its author, and discreditable to publisher and singer and all because the old Auntie told her little nephew that she couldn't marry him!

After "Auntie" followed "Daddy," one of the most successful of all the "domestic" songs which were so much in vogue at this time. The lyric, by Mary Mark Lemon, reached Behrend one morning before he was up, and so took his fancy that he jumped straight out of bed and set it.

"The Gift" was another song of Behrend's which Antoinette Sterling used to sing, and

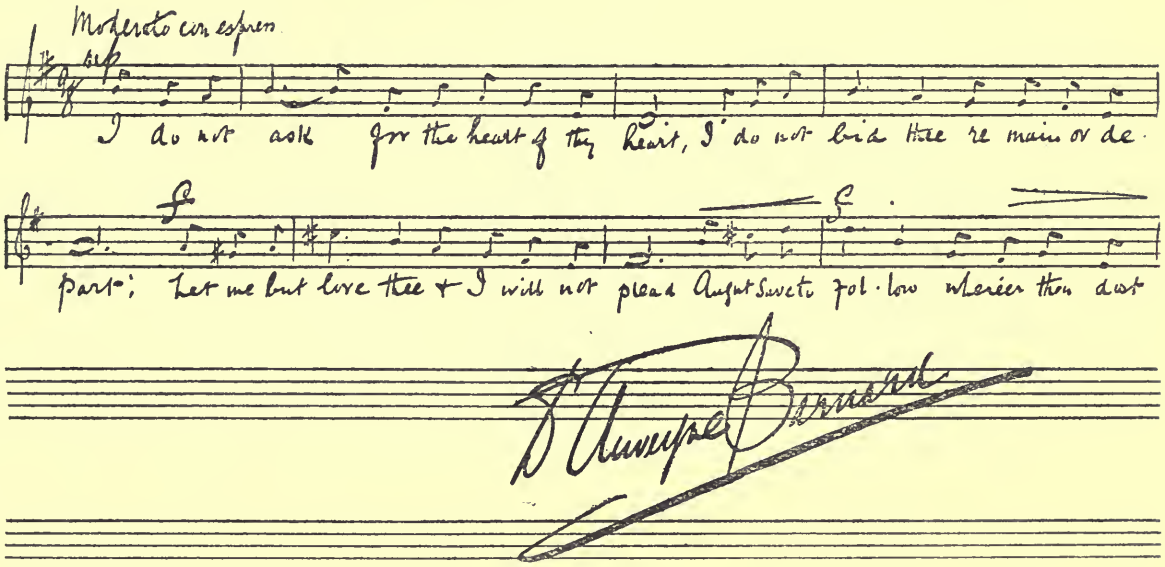
this was followed by his setting of Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar."

"Shortly after Tennyson's death," says Mr. Mackinlay, "Behrend came to call one day, and brought with him a very beautiful setting of 'Crossing the Bar.' The music at once appealed to Antoinette Sterling's dramatic feeling, with its impressive melody, and alternation of organ and piano, the two joining together finally in the lines—

I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the Bar.

Of all the times on which the song was rendered by her, one impressed itself above all the rest upon her memory. It was at a concert given one winter at Penzance. The elements seemed conspiring together to make a fit accompaniment to those glorious words. The wind was blowing as though all the Furies had been let loose. A storm was at its height, the lightning lit up the sky, and was followed a moment later by peal on peal of thunder. Inside the Concert Hall, like a deep "ground bass," was heard the heavy rise and fall of the sea, as the waves came roaring in to dash over the bar. The elements, thus joining in with the voice and the organ, combined to produce one of the most powerful effects which it would be possible to imagine."

Behrend's "Crossing the Bar," together with


Moderato con espres
sione
I do not ask for the heart of thy heart, I do not bid thee re main or de
f
part; Let me but live thee & I will not plead Angel Sweets fol low Mercer thou dost
f

Sullivan's "The Lost Chord," was sung at Antoinette Sterling's funeral.

To this same period belong the earlier song successes of D'Auvergne Barnard, of which the first was "Bid me to love," which enjoyed a widespread popularity and is still well known to-day.

Barnard relates a quaint experience which he had once when accompanying "Bid me to love" at the St. James's Hall. The song had a big reception, and after it was over a lady made her way to the artists' room and in a little piping voice asked to see the composer. Barnard went up to her and inquired what he could do for her. "Oh," she said, looking at him in a disappointed way, "are you the composer of 'Bid me to love'?" "I am," replied Barnard. "What a pity!" said the lady. "I always pictured you as a tall, handsome man!"

"Bid me to love" was followed by a number of successful songs, of which "I trust you still," "Shepherd of the Fold," "For thine own sake," "The Plains of Peace," "Life's Consolation," "The Land Across the Sea," and more recently a setting of Cardinal Newman's "Lead, kindly Light," have perhaps been the most popular.

Barnard is a great believer in taking plenty of time. He invariably carries several sets of words

about with him, and often has them in his mind for a year or longer before he attempts to set them. "I memorise the words," he said once, "eat them up, chew them thoroughly, until I am filled with the spirit of them." Then he awaits the necessary inspiration.

The songs of Lawrence Kellie may be said to form a sort of link between to-day and yesterday. It was in 1886 that he made his first public appearance, at the Royal Academy of Music concert, in the triple rôle of composer, singer, and accompanist, which was, I believe, a novelty in those days. The songs he sang on that occasion were "How easily things go wrong" and a setting of Tennyson's "As through the land at eve we went." To the former there is an interesting story attached.

Maude Valerie White heard the song, and was immensely struck with it. She took the young composer down to Metzler's and made him sing it to them. They were delighted with it, and straightway offered him a contract to write songs for them. From this circumstance sprang Kellie's future career as a composer. But as to the song itself there is yet another story. When it came to the question of publication a difficulty arose about the copyright of the words, which, as everyone knows, were written by George Macdonald, and it was not till twenty

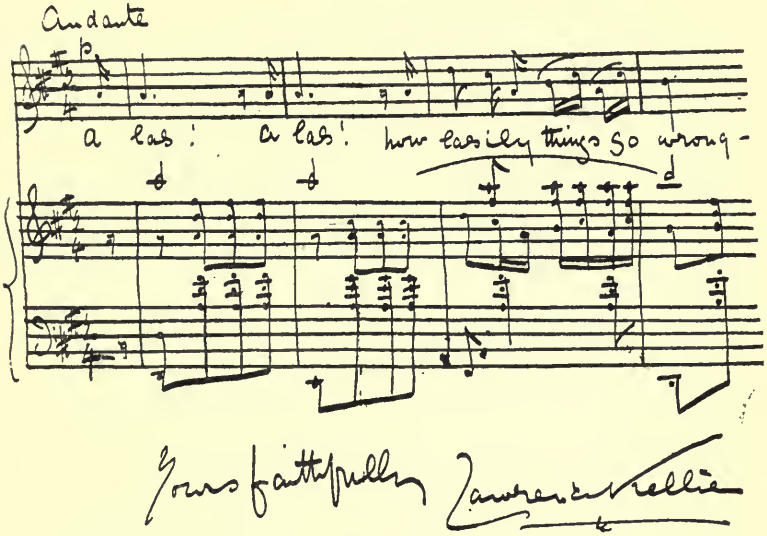
Ellis & Walery.

MR. LAWRENCE KELLIE.

[*London Stereoscopic Co.*

MR. LESLIE STUART.

(*See pages* 283–285.)

years afterwards that the song was actually published.

The list of Lawrence Kellie's successes is a very long one. He has sung them himself all over the world, and his delightful rendering of them at the piano no doubt contributed largely to their popularity. "Love's Nocturne," "I had a flower," "You ask me why I love" (made still more famous by Phil May's well-known caricature in *Punch*), "The Sleeping Tide," "A Winter Love Song," and of course "Douglas Gordon" are a few of the names that occur to one's mind.

In connection with "Douglas Gordon" Kellie tells rather a quaint experience. He was intro-

duced one evening at the Meistersinger Club to a gentleman whose name he did not catch. "I have no desire to meet you, Mr. Kellie," said the latter. Kellie naturally looked a little astonished, but said nothing. "In fact," the other went on, "I hate the very sound of your name. For months past my mother has been worried by the receipt of telegrams and letters of condolence on my behalf, and the thing is beginning to get monotonous." "I'm sorry," said Kellie; "but what's it got to do with me?" "Well, I'll tell you," returned the other. "My name's Douglas Gordon, and everybody imagines that your confounded song refers to me." And with that he turned on his heel and went.

The words of "Douglas Gordon" were written by Weatherly, and he, too, has an experience to relate in connection with it. Some time after the song was published he received a letter from a lady, in which she said: "Dear Sir, I like your song 'Douglas Gordon,' but I don't like suicide." To which Weatherly replied, "Dear Madam, nor do I!" The writer, however, would not leave him in peace, but thinking he was a composer as well as an author, sent him some verses of her own for him to set to music. They began as follows:—

> Would you die when your curls are all dense,
> And the passion of life is intense?

"As," says Weatherly, "I was then beginning to get bald, and had no inclination for suicide, I returned her verses speedily."

Like other composers, Kellie has written many songs which he himself prefers to some of those which have been popular successes. Amongst these may be mentioned "My Fairest Child," "The Boy and the Brook," and "Apple Blossoms." This last once received a very favourable and sympathetic notice from a critic in a well-known paper, and Kellie was delighted at receiving a few days later through his publishers a lyric by this selfsame critic to set to music. He wrote to the publishers to secure the words, and shortly afterwards sent them the song completed. It was called "Over the Desert," beginning "On, on, in the morning," and had a galloping motif in the accompaniment, descriptive of a horseman's wild career over the sandy plains on his Arab steed. Unfortunately, though the publishers had bought the words, the author discovered that he had unwittingly sold them twice over, and that the other composer's setting had already been published. He offered, however, to write new words to Kellie's music, and in due course they arrived, with a letter from the publishers expressing a hope that they would be found suitable. They began "Watch, watch in the sunlight," a peaceful invitation that seemed

hardly in accordance with the composer's galloping accompaniment. In a fit of fine frenzy Kellie sat down and dashed off a version of his own, which he sent to the publishers with an ironic note asking them whether they didn't think this was equally "suitable"? This amusing parody, needless to say, was *not* published, but I cannot refrain from quoting it here.

ROT IN THE DESERT

Rot! rot! in the desert
In the heat of the noontide sun;
While the birds of prey ere the close of day
Shall clean thy bones every one!
What a banquet now is before them spread,
See how the vultures gloat!
They have finished thy body, there is still thy head,
Thy boots, thy collar, and coat.

Rot! rot! in the desert,
etc., etc. etc.

Long before I had met Kellie, or heard him sing, I had acquired what might be called a "personal" interest in his career, for the reason that I was frequently being mistaken for him. I mention this fact, painful as it may be to him, because it has been the cause of one or two amusing experiences. One of these happened at the Cape, when I was staying at an hotel at Wynberg. A man at the table next to mine stared at me so hard all through dinner that I

began to feel uncomfortable. Afterwards when we were sitting in the smoking-room, silent and apart, as is the manner of Englishmen who are strangers to one another, he suddenly leant forward and said, "Pardon me, but aren't you a member of the musical profession?" "How did you guess that?" I answered. He evidently took this for an affirmative, and his face beamed. "Oh, well, Mr. Kellie," he said, "I've often heard you sing!"

CHAPTER XIII

SOME MODERN BALLADS AND THEIR COMPOSERS

THE ballad in modern times has broken off into two distinct branches, and in dealing with songs by the composers of to-day it will be possible to divide them, roughly at any rate, into two groups, those who mostly follow the old "three-decker" form of ballad and those who are chiefly known as composers of what may be called the "short song." Though in some cases the division may seem a somewhat arbitrary one, since several composers have been successful in both these branches of song-writing, yet it will serve well enough in the main. In the present chapter, therefore, I shall have to do with some modern examples of the old "three-decker" form of ballad.

"In Old Madrid" can hardly perhaps in a sense be called a "modern" ballad, as it is now a good many years ago since it first made its way into public favour, but its composer, H. Trotère, may be reckoned as essentially a modern composer. "In Old Madrid" was Trotère's first big

popular success, but not his first song. As a matter of fact, it was his twenty-ninth, or so he reckons it; the others either languished unpublished, or, if published, failed to attract much attention.

"In Old Madrid" came to be written in rather a curious way. Trotère wanted something that would do for a Spanish 'cello solo, and got the idea while playing in the orchestra at the Royal Aquarium, of which he was at that time a member. He rushed out between the performances into a little refreshment-room and asked for some note-paper. They had nothing but a Meredith and Drew biscuit-bag, and on this he wrote down the melody of "In Old Madrid."

Afterwards it struck him that it would make a good song, so he put it into song form and sent

it to Clifton Bingham, with the result that everyone knows. Curiously enough, neither author, composer, nor publisher anticipated that the song would have any very great popular success. How far they were wrong may be judged from the fact that there were no less than twenty-eight different editions at one time published in America—all pirated, of course, as there was no such thing as mutual copyright in those days.

"Asthore" was his next popular success. The idea came to him from seeing the names on engagement rings in Ireland, and he and Bingham worked it out between them to the music, which was already written. Of this song and "In Old Madrid" over two million copies have been sold, the sales at one time reaching as many as ten thousand a week!

Two very popular songs in which Weatherly and Trotère collaborated were "The Deathless Army" and "Go to Sea." In the case of the latter the music was written first, the idea coming to Trotère on the top of a bus, a favourite place for composers to find inspiration!

Of "The Brow of the Hill," another lyric by Clifton Bingham, Trotère tells the following story: "Somehow I could not set it, and had made up my mind to return it. I sat down and began a letter in which to enclose it. 'My dear Bingham, I am very'—sorry, I was going to

MR. W. H. SQUIRE. [*Portman Studios,*

MR. H. TROTÈRE. [*Mayse,*

say, but at that moment the melody came to me. I wrote it down and then continued the letter—'pleased to say I have struck an idea for your lyric.'" This song is one of the composer's own favourites, though it has not been so popular as some of his others.

Something of the same kind happened in the case of "Within your heart." Trotère had had the lyric for about eighteen months, and the author, Mrs. G. Hubi-Newcombe, kept writing to know when he was going to set her "poor little lyric"? At last he did so, but had no great faith in the result. Two publishers were evidently of the same opinion, as they refused it, calling it childish, and declaring that he must have meant it for a joke. Finally it was accepted, but so much under protest that he was only too glad to sell it outright without a royalty, a fact which he has since had good reason to regret!

Of the other songs by Trotère "My Old Shako," words by Francis Barron, has perhaps enjoyed the greatest popularity. It had such a vogue that a concert manager once requested a singer *not* to sing it, as the public must be tired of it. The singer, after some demur, agreed, but sang it as an encore, and had to repeat it!

The mention of Francis Barron, in connection with "My Old Shako," recalls the fact that he is the author of a number of popular songs of a

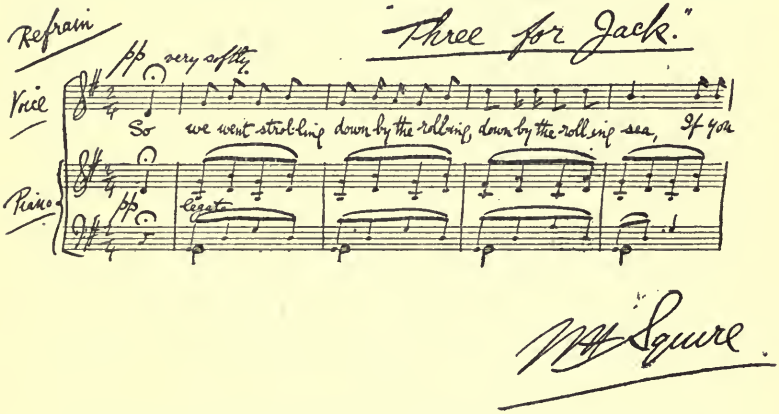
certain type, one of the best known perhaps being "The Trumpeter," set by J. Airlie Dix, a composer who has written many successful songs, notably "The Abbot of Guise," words by Clifton Bingham, and "A Jolly Old Cavalier."

The name of W. H. Squire is known by some people as a popular 'cellist, and by others as a popular song-writer, but not everyone is aware that he is one and the same person. In fact he has often been asked, when playing the 'cello, whether he was any relation of the "man who writes those popular songs," and has been forced to confess to a very close relationship.

Squire's first song "My love, Annie," was published as long ago as 1887, and there was an interval of six years between this and his next, "Sweethearts yet," which, through the kindness of his friend Hope Temple, then at the zenith of her career as a song-writer, was introduced to the notice of Messrs. Boosey, who published it. Neither of these songs achieved a great success, however, and it was not until ten years later that Squire made another bid for popularity in this branch of composition.

Meanwhile his name was well established as a composer of 'cello music. During a concert tour with his friends Clara Butt and Kennerley Rumford, in the spring of 1903, he wrote two duets specially for them, "Good Luck and Bad Luck"

and "In Love's Domain," following these up later with "The Harbour Lights," which they sang throughout their tour. With the name of Kennerley Rumford is associated Squire's biggest popular success, "Three for Jack," which the former sang at seventy-two concerts on one tour.



The year before this, however, had been published two other successful songs, "The Jolly Sailor" and "Like Stars Above." Squire had the words of the latter for over a year, and in the meanwhile some other composer had used them under another title. The latter's setting was not very well known, and Squire persuaded the composer to sell him the copyright of the words on condition that he published the song under a different name.

"The Jolly Sailor," so often sung by the late Denham Price, was the first of Squire's successful

sea-songs, and when Weatherly brought him the lyric of "Three for Jack," he refused it because, though he liked it immensely, he was afraid that the public might think it too much of the same type as "The Jolly Sailor." Then rather a curious thing happened. Weatherly sold the lyric to Chappell's, who sent it to Squire with a request that he would set it! Thus it came back to him after all.

"Mountain Lovers," sung by John McCormack, and "The Token" are two more recent songs of Squire's which have been very successful. Of the latter there is a story to tell, and I give it in Squire's own words. "When I had set 'The Token,' some whim made me determine to put a pseudonym to it, and I signed it 'Margery Fisher.' Ivor Foster took the song to Boosey's for me, and I am indebted to him for the account of what followed. Foster sang the song through, Liddle accompanying him at the piano, and Mr. Arthur Boosey asked to see the manuscript, as he liked the song immensely. 'Who's Margery Fisher?' he asked of Foster. 'Has she ever had anything published before?' The latter began to feel very uncomfortable, and murmured something to the effect that he didn't think so. His discomfort was increased by the fact that Liddle, who had recognised the writing as mine, was bursting with laughter. 'This is no novice's work," said Mr. Boosey, looking at the manu-

script again. 'I believe it's by some well-known composer.' Then he appealed to Mr. Hatch and Mr. Mudie, who were both in the room. Each made a different guess as to 'Margery Fisher's' identity. 'Sing it again, will you?' said Arthur Boosey to Foster. Foster accordingly sang it again. 'I know,' said Mr. Boosey triumphantly, when he had finished, 'it's Squire's!' And Squire's it was!"

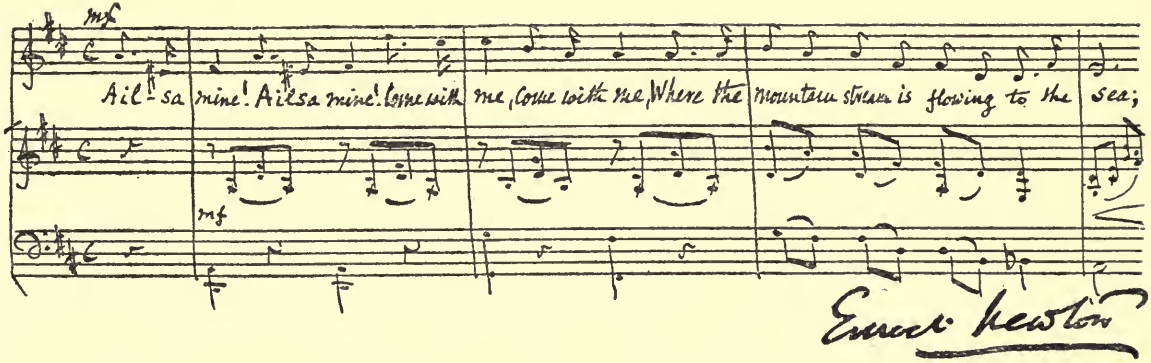
Ballads of a more humorous turn by this composer are "A Sergeant of the Line" (words by Weatherly), sung with so much success by Harry Dearth; "The Corporal's Ditty," words by Edward Teschemacher, and "A Chip of the Old Block," for which I must claim responsibility. The latter provides an illustration of how careful it is necessary to be in writing the words of a song so as not to offend the delicate susceptibilities of the public. Some time after "A Chip of the Old Block" was published the publishers sent me on a letter which they had received from a large firm of music-sellers in the country. "Dear Sirs, we are writing to ask you whether it would be possible to get the author of Squire's 'Chip of the Old Block' to alter two of the lines of his lyric. The lines referred to are the following:—

The sea's the very divil, and
A woman's just as bad!

"The song would have a very large sale with us were it not for the fact that many singers complain that they cannot sing the above at our local 'chapel teas'!" Perhaps the fact that the word was printed "devil" had something to do with it, for between "devil" and "divil" there is a great gulf fixed, I don't know why. In a like way the sales of "The Corporal's Ditty" are said to have been affected by the inclusion, not of the "too-frequent damn," because it only occurred once, but by the circumstance that it occurred at all.

While on the subject of these humorous ballads two other examples of the kind which have had a considerable success may just be noted, "Young Tom O'Devon," by Kennedy Russell, sung by Charles Tree, who is also associated with Hermann Löhr's "Dumbledum Day"; and "Stone-cracker John," by Eric Coates, sung by Harry Dearth. It may be noted by way of contrast that the last-named composer is responsible for some delightful settings of Shakespeare songs, which were produced by the late Mrs. Henry Wood at the promenade concerts last year.

Another popular ballad of this type is "The Drum Major," by Ernest Newton. Newton is well known as the composer of two of the most popular songs of their day, "Ailsa Mine," which


mf
Ail sa mine! Ail sa mine! Come with me, come with me, Where the mountain stream is flowing to the sea;
mf
Ernest Newton

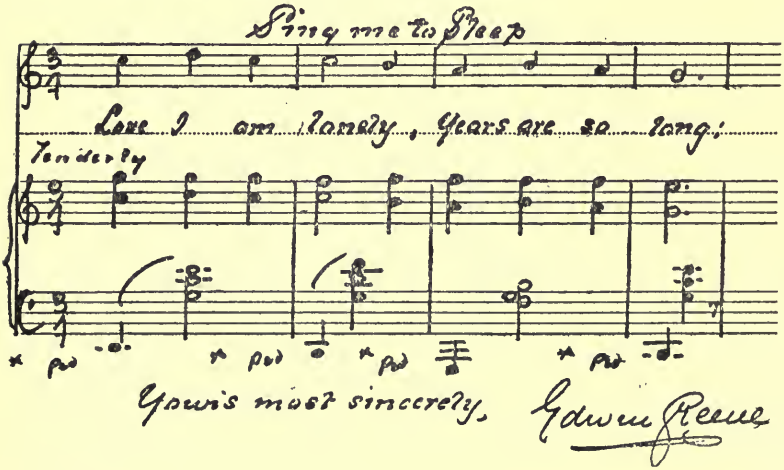
used to be sung so charmingly by Jack Robertson, and "Nita Gitana."

One of his earliest songs was "The Beat of the Drum," which he sold to a publisher for a small sum and a royalty, only to be offered one hundred guineas for it shortly afterwards by a well-known singer. Two of his most successful songs, "For love of you" and "Roses by summer forsaken," have been especial favourites of Clara Butt's. Among his other songs may be mentioned "Love's Echo," "The Magic Month of May," "Through the Forest," "I came to you," and "There, little girl, don't cry," written for Maurice Farkoa.

As far as the lyrics of these "three-decker" ballads are concerned, Weatherly, of course, still stands *facile princeps!* Next to him, both as regards the length of time he has been before the public and the number of songs he has written, comes Clifton Bingham. His work is, of course, well known, and his name has already been mentioned a number of times in this book in connection with some of the most popular songs of recent years. One of his most successful achievements was the writing of new words to the Monk's song in Audran's *La Poupée.* The original words did not seem to obtain the desired effect, so Bingham was called in to fit new words to the music. The moment he heard

the melody the phrase "A jovial monk am I" jumped to his mind, and in a day the whole lyric was completed. When sung by Norman Salmond for the first time with the new words it received a double encore, and has long since become firmly established in public favour.

Clifton Bingham is very closely associated with the work of two composers, Edwin Greene and Edward St. Quentin. Of the former's songs "Sing Me to Sleep" has attained an enormous popularity, though Bingham declares that the lyric was offered to over forty composers and publishers before it ultimately found acceptance.



Of Greene's other successful songs may be mentioned "I know a lane in springtime," "The Beautiful Land of Nod," "Springtide" (the first

[*Russell.*

MR. CLIFTON BINGHAM.

[*Ellis & Walery.*

MR. EDWIN GREENE.

of the composer's songs to attain popularity), and "The Fleeting Years." As to the last I may quote an interesting paragraph which appeared in the *Illustrated London News* some time ago: "Mr. Edwin Greene dedicated his song 'The Fleeting Years' to Queen Alexandra; Her Majesty was so pleased with the compliment and with the work, that she sought to preserve it in some tangible form. With this desire came the happy thought of a record for her gramophone, and Her Majesty then and there commanded the management of the company who made the machine to supply her want. At once Mr. Edward Lloyd was approached. He is living in retirement near Worthing, but the royal command had to be obeyed, and with delight he journeyed to London, there to make an excellent record."

The list of St. Quentin's songs is an imposing one, and it is only possible to mention a few of the most successful here. Such are "Beyond," "The Heart of a Sailor," "Jack's Wife," "The Jolly Jack Tar," and "Smuggler Bill."

Leslie Stuart's name is, of course, well known as a composer of light operas, and many of the songs in them have become popular favourites. The same may be said of four other light-opera composers, Ivan Caryll, Sidney Jones, Lionel Monckton, and Howard Talbot. Two of Stuart's

separate songs may be mentioned here, "The Bandolero" and "Soldiers of the Queen."

The former was written when Stuart was a young man. He took it to Foli one day, and shaking with nervousness, asked the great basso whether he might play it to him. "What's it about?" asked Foli. "A Bandolero," said Stuart. "Bandits," answered Foli brusquely, "I don't want a song about bandits." "Ah, but this is a sort of bandit you've never heard about — or anyone else either," said Stuart, smiling. The frankness pleased Foli, who consented to hear the song, and liked it so much that he insisted on taking the composer up to London and introducing him to Chappell's.

"Soldiers of the Queen" leapt into prominence during the time of the Boer War. It had been published some years before, but had not attracted much attention. It was first made popular by Hayden Coffin, whose name is, of course, equally associated with another patriotic ditty, "Private Tommy Atkins," the words of which are by Henry Hamilton and the music by S. Potter.

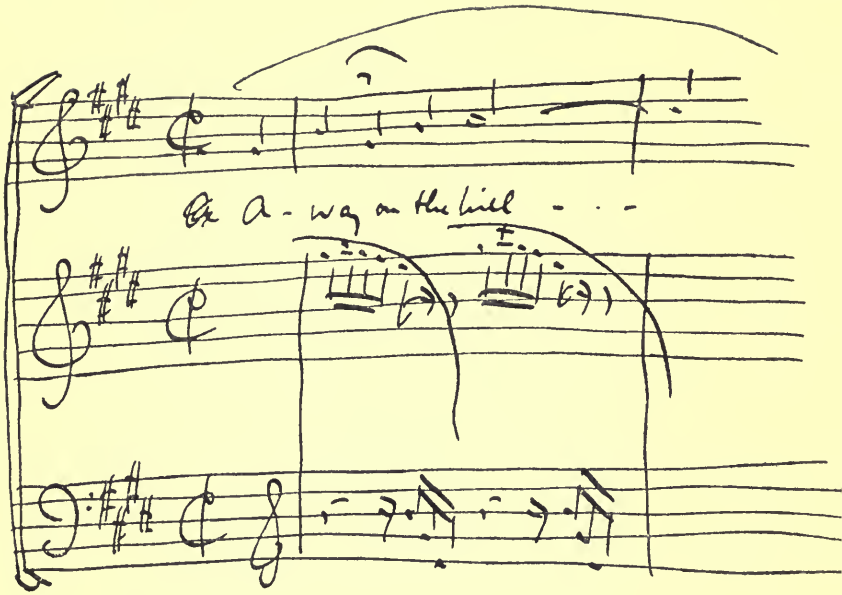
Stuart has written a number of coon songs, both in and out of his operas. The first of these was "Louisiana Lou." When the song reached America it was thought to be the product of a native Southern composer, as it happened to strike the very vein and colour of Southern nigger

melody. Later, however, when they discovered that the composer was an Englishman they refused to recognise any more of his coon songs as the genuine article.

Of the numberless other composers of modern ballads it is impossible in a book of this kind to do more than mention a few of the best known. Among these the name of S. Liddle, the well-known accompanist, occupies a prominent place. His setting of "Abide with Me" has already been mentioned in connection with Clara Butt, who has made this song essentially her own, a remark that may apply almost equally to the same composer's "A Song of Good Courage." Of Liddle's short songs special mention may be made of his "Two Little Songs," "To tell thee how I love," and "In my Garden."

Robert Batten is another composer with a long list of popular songs standing to his name, among which "Peace and Rest" and "April Morn" are probably the best known. J. M. Capel's "Lorraine, Lorraine, Lorrée," "Love, could I only tell thee," and "Eldorado," Wolseley Charles's "Dream Pictures" and "The Galley Slave," Charles Marshall's "I hear you calling me" and "When Shadows Gather," the late E. J. Margetson's "Tommy Lad," Gordon Temple's "Trooper Johnny Ludlow," R. H. Walthew's "The Gleaner's Slumber Song," Edward

Murray's "The Nights," and Harold Parsons' "What does little birdie say?" are all songs that have been popular successes during recent years. To these may be added the songs of Edward Nicholls, Florian Pascal, Benjamin Godard, and the late G. S. Aspinall, together with several songs by American composers, of which "Allah," by G. W. Chadwick; "The Sweetest Flower that Blows," by C. B. Hawley; "Absent," by J. W. Metcalf; "My Rosary," by Ethelbert Nevin; and "Thy Beaming Eyes," by Edward MacDowell, are popular instances.

But, as I have indicated, the list is almost limitless. One might go on indefinitely writing on the subject, and adding name upon name. At the risk, therefore, of being accused of having omitted many names that should have been included, I must pass on to another chapter, and to the consideration of those composers who are chiefly associated with the short song.

From "Songs of the Hill"

Words by Harold Simpson

Music by

Landon Ronald.

CHAPTER XIV

THE SONG-CYCLE AND THE SHORT SONG

THE vogue of the song-cycle and the short song has been a distinctive feature of song-writing during the last decade or so. The two are intimately connected, and the one may be said to be the direct and natural outcome of the other.

To take the song-cycle first, one of the names which is most closely associated with this form of composition is that of Landon Ronald. His earliest song-cycle, *Summertime*, the words of which are by Edward Teschemacher, was produced by the London Philharmonic Society. Several individual numbers of this cycle, which was sung a great deal at one time by Ben Davies, have become extremely popular, notably "O Lovely Night."

The *Four Songs of the Hill* were written for and produced by Muriel Foster. Of these four songs, "Away on the Hill" and "A Little Winding Road" have proved the chief favourites,

the latter being, perhaps, one of the most popular songs of the kind Ronald ever wrote.

At the risk of being considered egotistical, I should like to mention here that I wrote this cycle specially for Ronald, as was also the case with *A Cycle of Life*, one number of which, "Down in the Forest," is a great favourite of Melba's. Apropos of lyric-writing, I mentioned in an earlier chapter a story of Clifton Bingham's with regard to "The Promise of Life," in which it transpired that a singer who had sung the song an endless number of times had never noticed whom the words were by. This recalls an experience of my own with regard to the *Four Songs of the Hill*. Dining at the house of a friend one night, I was introduced to a lady who discovered in the course of conversation that I wrote lyrics. "It's strange that I don't seem to know your name," she murmured apologetically; "I am so *very* fond of music, and I sing *all* the latest songs. I'll sing you one of my *greatest* favourites after dinner." She did — it was "A Little Winding Road"!

Outside his cycles Ronald has written a number of successful songs, among which are, to mention only a few, "Wise Folly," "Dolly O'Dean," "The Dove," "One long thought of you," "Sunbeams," "Your Waking Eyes," and "Believe me, if all those endearing young charms."

[*Ellis & Walery,*

MR. EDWARD TESCHEMACHER.

[*Dover Street Studios.*

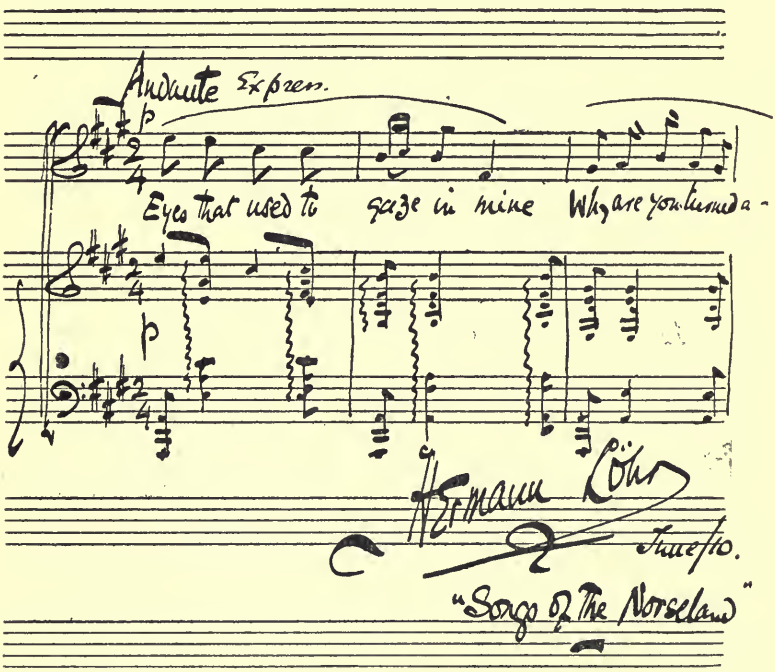
MR. LANDON RONALD.

Of late years Ronald has come rapidly to the front as a conductor, and in this connection it will be remembered that he won unanimous praise from the German critics for his conducting of the famous Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. Since last year he has been the permanent conductor of the New Symphony Orchestra in London.

G. H. Clutsam's *Songs from the Turkish Hills* have already been mentioned as having been produced by Kennerley Rumford at Huddersfield. One of these, "I know of two bright eyes," has been one of the most popular songs of recent years. Other song-cycles of this composer are his *Hesperides* (settings of Herrick) and *Songs of the Desert*. Of his separate songs amongst the most popular are "Vanity Fair," "A Folk Song," "Life's Gifts," "I Wander the Woods," "The Dream Seller," and—a coon song, "Ma Curly-headed Babby," which has enjoyed an extraordinary popularity.

Hermann Löhr's *A Garland of Song*, words by Harold Boulton, and *The Little Sunbonnet* and *Songs of the Norseland*, words by Edward Teschemacher, must find a place among modern song-cycles. Of the latter one number especially, "Eyes that used to gaze in mine," has proved immensely popular.

Of his separate songs mention may be made of

his *Two Little Love Songs* ("For lack and love of you" and "World that was once a garden"), and more recently his "Unmindful of the roses" and "It is not because your heart is mine." But Löhr belongs as much, if not more, to the com-

posers of the longer form of ballad, as is witnessed by the success of such songs as "Nelson's gone a-sailing," "Chorus, Gentlemen," "When Jack and I were children," "In the heather, my lads," and numberless others. His

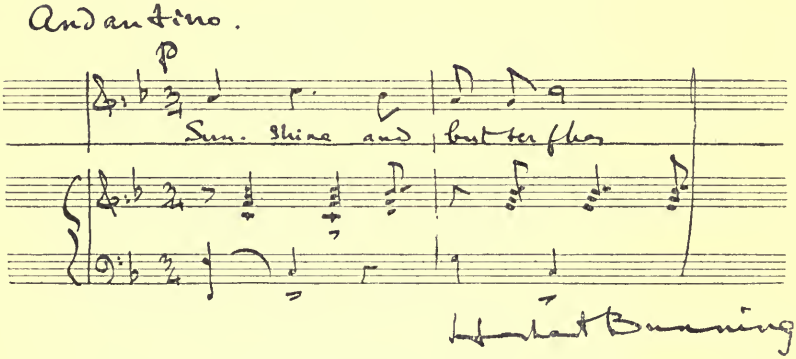
Irish songs have also had a considerable vogue, which is somewhat remarkable from the fact that he has never been in Ireland; but, as he once said himself, he has "an Irish wife, which is the next best thing to being Irish oneself."

An interesting point about Löhr's songs is the fact that he always keeps constantly in his eye the singers he intends to write for. With the exception of his song albums, he nearly always writes his songs for some definite artist. It is noteworthy that the early ambitions of this composer were all in the direction of orchestral works and opera. "But," he says, "I soon found I could never live on such work in this country, and so I took to song-writing."

Two other song-cycles that should find a place here are William Wallace's *Freebooter Songs* and H. Lane Wilson's *Flora's Holiday*. Lane Wilson is, of course, well known as a singer and as a composer of old English lyrics, of which, to mention only one, "Phillis has such charming graces" is such a delightful example.

One of the latest additions to the ranks of composers of the song-cycle is Herbert Bunning, whose *Roses and Rue* was produced quite recently. Bunning has long been known as a composer of popular songs, of which perhaps the most

successful and best known is his "Sunshine and Butterflies."



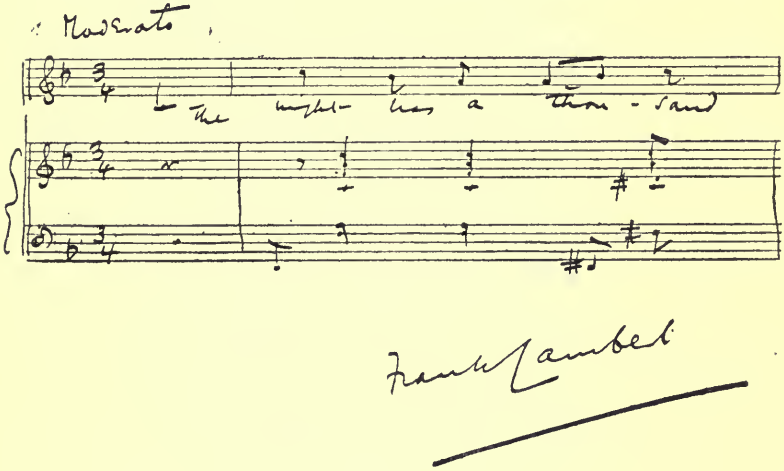
Other songs of Bunning's which have been very popular are "In the Maytime," from the play *Robin Hood*, for which he composed the incidental and other music; "The Pearl," "The Carnival of Spring," "The First White Snowdrop," "The Wind that shakes the Barley," some of which, by the way, hardly belong to the category of the short song. The last named is one of the composer's own favourites, chiefly because, as he says, he feels he has succeeded in getting the right "atmosphere." Of Bunning's shorter songs, "Humility" (a setting of Herrick's "I dare not ask a kiss"), and his two little songs "Friendship" and "Treason," should be mentioned.

Bunning tells an amusing story of the time when he was musical conductor at the Lyric Theatre, which, though not actually to do with

the subject of song-writing, is worth repeating here. He conducted Albeniz's *Magic Opal*, and at the end of the run the composer asked Bunning to let him have his baton. A few days later the baton was returned; round it was a gold band with an inscription from the composer, while in the extreme tip was set an opal. It was a very delicate little attention, but from that moment everything Bunning touched began to go wrong: illnesses, lawsuits, and misfortunes generally followed one another in quick succession. Happening to mention this to a journalistic friend, the latter, on ascertaining that Bunning's birthday month was May, attributed all his ill-luck to the possession of the opal, and begged him to get rid of it. "You mustn't sell it or throw it away," he said; "all you can do is to give it to a friend, only choose one to whom you don't mind doing a bad turn." Rather amused at the whole thing, Bunning suggested sending it to Mr. Gladstone, whose politics he disliked—not believing in the superstition, of course, but more as a joke than anything else. Gladstone duly received the gift, and a week later was shot at by a would-be assassin, while at the same time his wife was taken ill and nearly died! Bunning has a moonstone set in the baton now!

Closely allied to the song-cycle is the *Series of Short Songs*, a fashion that was first made popular

by Frank Lambert. "This series," says the composer himself, "was a long while in being started, but this one can easily understand, as the whole character of the edition was a new departure in the song-publishing world." The first four of these songs included "The Night has a Thousand Eyes" and "A Barque at Midnight," probably



the two most popular numbers of the whole series. Of the former Lambert tells a curious story.

"The lyric," he says, "came to me from America (I set it in three-quarters of an hour), signed F. W. Bourdillon. I asked everyone who Bourdillon was. Some said they were at Eton with him, others that he flourished in the sixteenth century. The discussion seemed interminable, so I decided in favour of the sixteenth-century theory,

[*E. H. Mills.*

MR. NOEL JOHNSON.

MR. FRANK LAMBERT.

and the song was published. Later, however, came a letter from, I think, Van Diemen's Land, where the author 'professes' something in a university, remarking that he noticed his poetry had been set to music for about the thirty-fourth time, and asking for a cheque!"

Something of a very similar kind happened in the case of "Bonjour, Pierrot," one of Lambert's longer songs. He found the words in an old American magazine, unsigned. It was not until the song had been popular for some time that they were recognised by Weatherly as being his own.

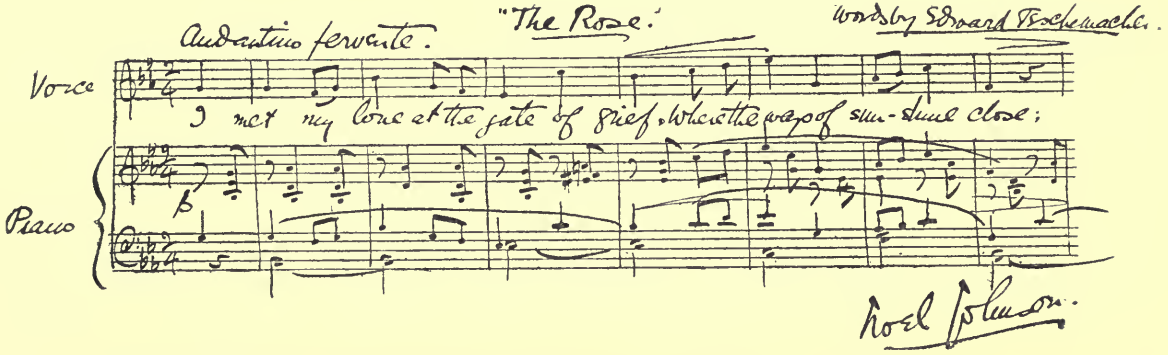
The author of "A Barque at Midnight," too, was untraceable for years, and the song ran through many editions before an unknown correspondent informed the publishers that it was no tyro's peripatetic attempt, but the work of one Tom Moore. This song, by the way, enjoys the distinction of having been the subject of numberless parodies in the way of cartoons and caricatures, bulldogs baying sharps and flats at the moon, and other things of that kind.

Of Lambert's longer songs none has enjoyed a greater popularity than his setting of Moore's "She is far from the land." And yet it was years before he could get it published. I cannot do better than give the story in his own words.

"The occasional difficulty in getting composi-

tions published is often galling to the young, but amusing to think of in after life. 'She is far from the land,' which I composed very many years ago, is a case in point. Looking through reviews of part songs one day, I caught sight of the words 'an indifferent setting of Moore's somewhat lugubrious poem "She is far from the land."' This struck me at once as a title, and I proceeded forthwith to purchase a very cheap edition of Moore's poems, having composed the first half-phrase before reaching the shop; the second came on reading the rest of the line, and the rest of the melody as quickly as I could put it on paper. Considering what success the ballad has won, it is almost incredible to think what numbers of years it took to be accepted. I offered it literally to every publisher in London and New York, not once, but several times, and it was only on the strength of Hayden Coffin's fine singing of another of my songs and his desire to sing this one that Chappell's decided to publish it."

Surprises of this kind are not unknown in the history of music-publishing; and Lambert relates another of his own experiences in this respect.

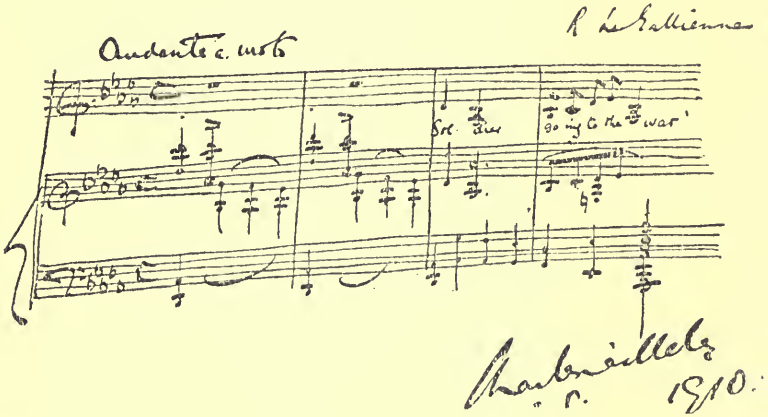
"The same firm (how they laughed when I took it to them! for no one ever thought I could write a valse, not even myself) published 'Caressante' just to please me. It looked as though their merriment had been justified when the thing had

Andantino fervente.
"The Rose."
Words by Edward Teschemacher.
Voice
I met my love at the gate of grief, Where the ways of sun-shine close;
Piano
Noel Johnson.

lain inert on their shelves for two or three years, but by degrees it asserted itself, and has now become a pest all over the five continents."

Noel Johnson is another composer who has made a speciality of the short song, though his first big success, "If thou wert blind," can hardly be said to come under that category. This song has had a long run of popularity, and has the distinction of being published in both a French and a German edition. The words are by Constance Sutcliffe. Of his short songs none have ever exceeded the popularity of "The Rose" and "The River and the Sea," the words of which are by Teschemacher.

Johnson has also published several settings of Heine which he himself considers to be among his best work. Later he has taken more to the composition of the longer ballad, of which his "Farewell to Summer" is an example.

The songs of Charles Willeby are well known, both in this country and America. "The birds go north again," "Four-leaf Clover," and "Summer Rain" are among the most popular songs of recent years, and these are only a few of those that might be named. Willeby has a great liking for setting the poems of the late W. E. Henley, and two of these, "I send you roses" and "When the west is paling," have been amongst the most popular of his songs. "Mr.

Willeby has gone to an excellent source for his musical inspiration," wrote a critic once, "for quite his best things are identified with some of the most exquisite verses written by W. E. Henley. . . . Mr. Henley writes literature that is almost music, and Mr. Willeby writes music that seems almost to possess a literary quality. There you have a combination that is almost ideal." One of Willeby's most recent songs is a setting of Richard Le Gallienne's "Soldier, take my heart with you."

Of other songs and their composers one might mention Hubert Bath's "The Bells of Youth," "Your Kiss," and "One Tender Look"; Charles Braun's *Heather Songs* and *Six Orchard Songs*; Robert Coningsby Clarke's *Miniatures*, which include "A Bowl of Roses,"

"A Golden Thread," and "April, April," and his more recent *Sheaf of Little Songs;* the songs of the late Garnet W. Cox, especially his settings of Heine; Charles Deacon's "A Rose Memory"; Albert Mallinson's "Sing, break into song," "Slow, Horses, Slow," and "On the way to Kew"; Carlton Mason's "The Empty Nest"; Graham Peel's "Requiem," and "I will make you brooches"; Cyril Scott's "Blackbird's Song," "Don't come in, sir, please," and "Love's Quarrel"; Reginald Somerville's "So let it be," "The Dew," and "Contrasts"; Jack Thompson's "My Violet," "An Emblem," and "I live for you"; Frank Tours's "Wind in the Orchard"; and the songs of Percy Pitt, Sir C. Paston Cooper, Bothwell Thomson, Montague Phillips, Kent Sutton, Bernard Rolt, A. Von Ahn Carse, Ralph Raymond, Kenneth Rae, F. W. Sparrow, Felix Swinstead, Howard Fisher, and Godfrey Nutting.

Prominent among the lyric-writers of the short song is Edward Teschemacher, who may indeed be said to have been almost the first to make a speciality of this sort of lyric. The first of his songs to be published was "Speak but one word," set by Frank Lambert, a favourite of Marie Tempest's. That is not so many years ago, and to-day he can claim to be the author of nearly six hundred published songs.

It is interesting to note that Teschemacher

writes the majority of his lyrics actually at the piano. "When I want a new lyric," he says, "I sit down to the piano and improvise—just play anything that comes into my head, and in a little while I get an idea, and then it clothes itself in words, and the lyric is there, in my brain, ready to be put on paper."

Among the most popular of his published lyrics are "Because," "I know a lovely garden," "The Dawn," "O Lovely Night," "The Rose," "The River and the Sea," "The Little Irish Girl," and "Songs of the Norseland."

Of other lyric-writers who are the authors of many of the popular songs, long and short, of recent years, mention may be made of Edward Oxenford, Florence Attenborough ("Chrystabel"), Gunby Hadath, Walter E. Grogan, G. Hubi-Newcombe, Ernest Alfieri, A. Horspool, May Byron, Alfred Hyatt, P. J. O'Reilly, Florence Hoare, Olga Fricksen, Ruth Rutherford, Percy J. Barrow, H. Ernest Hunt, Fred G. Bowles, and J. Anthony Macdonald. And even then the list is by no means complete.

MR. CHARLES WILLEBY.

[*Foulsham & Banfield.*

MADAME LIZA LEHMANN.

CHAPTER XV

SOME PRESENT-DAY WOMEN COMPOSERS

ONE of the most notable features of the art of song-writing in recent years is the large increase in the number of lady composers. Twenty years ago their names could be reckoned on the fingers of one hand; to-day they present quite a long and imposing array.

Among so many whose names have become household words as composers of popular songs, there is one who enjoys rather an unique distinction, from the fact that she made her name as a public singer before she wooed fame as a song-writer. I refer, of course, to Liza Lehmann, who for nine years filled a prominent place on the concert platform as a soprano singer. She benefited greatly in this capacity from the advice and encouragement of Jenny Lind, who, on hearing her sing as a child, is reported to have said:—"If God gives me the strength, some day I should like to teach that child"—a desire that eventually found its fulfilment.

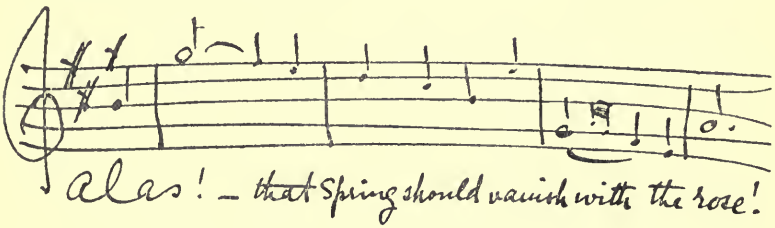
Turning to Liza Lehmann's work as a song-

writer, it is probably by her "In a Persian Garden" that she is best known to the world at large. These settings of Omar Khayyam have made a very wide appeal, and may be counted among her greatest successes, both from an artistic and a popular point of view. Curiously enough, it was the American public that first took them up so enthusiastically. "I still regard America as the 'Persian Garden's' fairy godmother," she said once, "to the kindness of whose reception I owe everything."

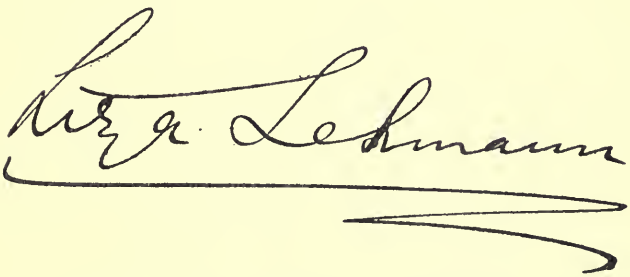
"In a Persian Garden" was followed by the *In Memoriam* cycle from Tennyson, which contains many beautiful numbers. The first performance of the well-known *Daisy Chain* cycle took place at the composer's house in St. John's Wood. This cycle made an instantaneous success; so much so that "Daisy Chain" tours, "Daisy Chain" concerts, and "Daisy Chain" at-homes became all the fashion. This was followed by "More Daisies," "The Life of a Rose" (written for and sung by Louise Dale), and the fascinating *Bird Songs*.

More recent song-cycles are the *Nonsense Songs*, from *Alice in Wonderland*, which have become immensely popular, the *Four Cautionary Tales*, sung by Clara Butt and Kennerley Rumford, and the album of *Breton Folk Songs*, the words of which are by the well-known Breton

writer Frances M. Gostling. Liza Lehmann's list of separate songs is a very long one and it would be useless to make an attempt to name them all. "Long ago in Egypt" and "A Tuscan Serenade" are perhaps two of the best known outside her song-cycles.



(From "In a Persian Garden")



It may be noted here that Liza Lehmann's mother, Mrs. Rudolf Lehmann, was herself an accomplished song-writer, and published many charming songs under the initials "A. L."

It is some years ago now since Frances Allitsen

began writing songs. "When I started composing," she said once, "I had no technical knowledge, and found it difficult to put my songs on paper." Then she took them to Mr. Weist Hill, head of the Guildhall School of Music, who was struck with their merits and offered her a free scholarship in the theory of music. She afterwards won the Lady Mayoress's prize for an overture, "Undine."

Frances Allitsen's first successful song was "An Old English Love Song," which was introduced to the public by Herbert Thorndike, who also brought out the more famous "Song of Thanksgiving." The last song was, it is said, considered a hopeless venture by the publishers, on account of its difficult accompaniment! How far they were wrong in this estimate has since been conclusively proved. They offered it first to Edward Lloyd, but he did not care for the words. Afterwards it was sung both by Clara Butt and Margaret Macintyre. It is interesting to recall that Lilian Russell once sang it to the prisoners in the Tombs Prison, New York, where it met with an enthusiastic reception, and that a French version has been sung by Plançon. And here it may be mentioned that a number of operatic singers have shown a partiality for this composer's songs, a fact of which she is justly proud.

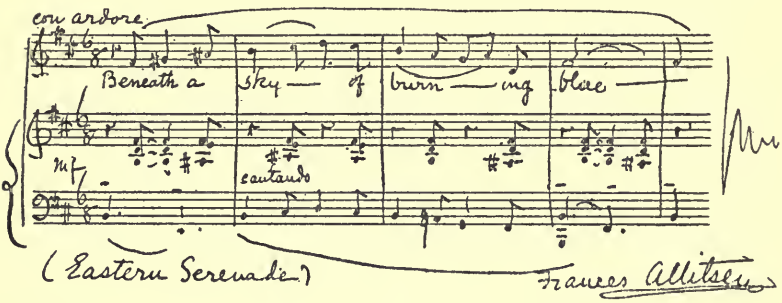
"A Song of Thanksgiving," was not copyrighted

in America, with the result that it was pirated there broadcast—a delicate compliment that has been paid to many popular English ballads.

Perhaps the most universally popular of Frances Allitsen's songs has been "There's a Land," the words of which are by Charles Mackay. It lay for some years on the publisher's shelves neglected, until, at the time of Queen Victoria's Jubilee, Miss Agnes Sibley, the head of a ladies' school in the West of England, wrote an extra verse referring to the Queen, and asked whether her pupils might sing it. The publishers agreed to include the extra verse in the song, and then Clara Butt took it up, meeting with a tremendous reception the first time she sang it at Belfast. From that moment the song leapt into popularity.

Other patriotic songs by this composer are "When the Boys come Home," "Sons of the City" (dedicated to the C.I.V.), and "England, my England"; while songs of a different type, but equally popular, are "Prince Ivan's Song," words by Marie Corelli, which has been sung so much by Hayden Coffin; "Mary Hamilton," a great favourite of Blanche Marchesi's, and "An Eastern Serenade."

Her sacred songs include "The Lord is my Light," "Oh, for a burst of song," "Like as the hart desireth," and "Lift thy heart," both of the last two being great favourites of Ada

Crossley's; and a duet, "Break, Divine Light," written for Clara Butt and Kennerley Rumford.

Owing perhaps to the virility of her songs, Frances Allitsen is often credited by the public with being a man, and frequently receives letters addressed to F. Allitsen, Esq. In this connection she tells an amusing story. Once when she was dining out, a gentleman who was also a guest, and who was unaware of her identity, happened to mention the name of one of her songs, and someone asked him whether he knew the composer. "Know old Frank Allitsen?" he said. "I should think I do. A jolly good chap he is too; we often have a game of billiards together."

One of Florence Aylward's earliest musical recollections is a somewhat painful one. She had a children's quarrel with her sister as to which of them should have the use of the piano, and having secured the best of the argument, she sat down to play an arrangement of the

[*Histed.*

MISS FLORENCE AYLWARD.

[*Russell.*

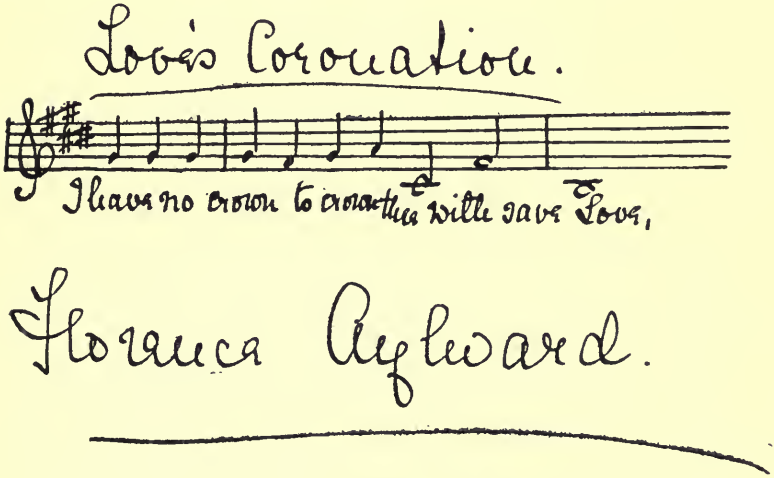
MISS FRANCES ALLITSEN.

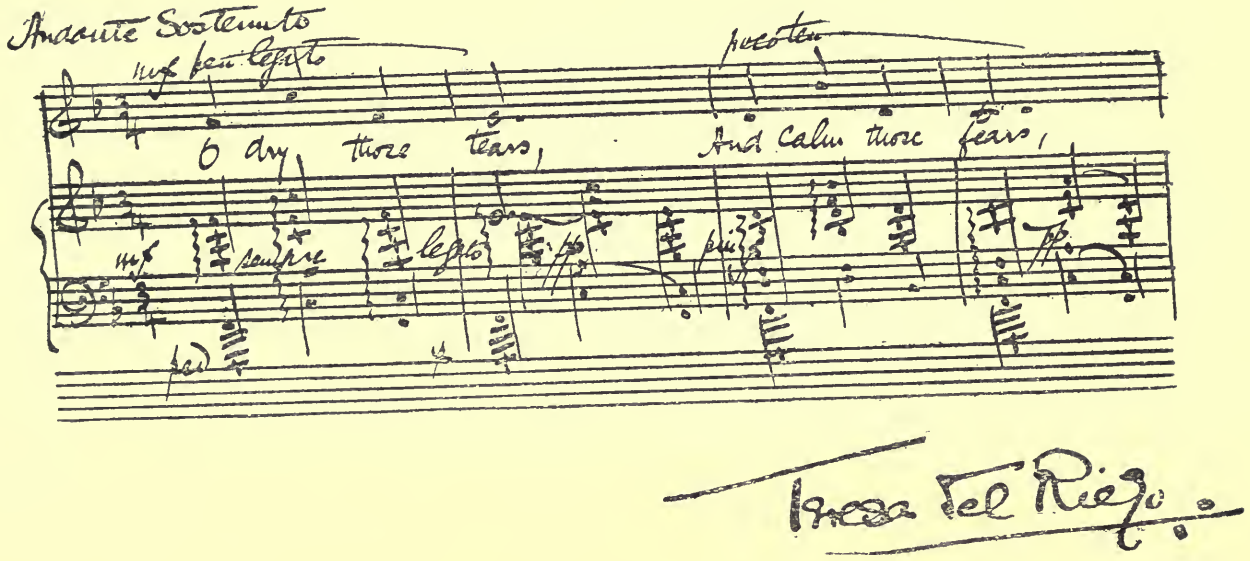
"Gloria in Excelsis" from Haydn's 12th Mass. Meanwhile her sister was quietly heating the poker in the fire, and, at the end of the pianoforte solo, proceeded to apply it to the tip of the player's nose. Since then the 12th Mass "Gloria" has held unpleasant associations.

Florence Aylward began song-writing when about twelve years old. These early efforts never saw print, but the applause of the villagers (who hardly knew one note from another) when they were sung at the local concerts was very gratifying to the young composer. Her first "real" song, as she calls it, was "Daydawn," which she sent to Messrs. Boosey, asking what the cost of having a hundred copies printed would be. To her astonishment, they wrote back offering to publish the song and to pay her five guineas for it, at the same time asking to see any others she had written. "I owe everything," she said once, "to the unfailing help and encouragement of my friend and publisher, Mr. William Boosey"; and when the latter went to Chappell's her songs were, and have continued to be, published by that firm. It was by Mr. Boosey's advice that she went to the Guildhall School of Music and studied orchestration under Henry Gadsby.

"Beloved, it is morn" is undoubtedly the most successful of all Florence Aylward's songs. Curiously enough, it had a narrow escape of never

being published at all. The composer had done two verses, but was unable to finish it before going to stay with some friends. When she got home she found to her dismay that the copy of the words had disappeared. She couldn't remember how the last verse went or who was the author, and it was nearly three months before the missing lyric was discovered by the housemaid among a lot of old papers at the house where she had been staying.

Next in point of popularity, to mention only two others of a large number of successful songs,

come the "Song of the Bow" and "Love's Coronation," the latter having proved almost as popular as "Beloved, it is morn."

There are probably few songs of modern times

Andante Sostenuto
mf ben legato
O dry those tears,
poco ten
And calm those fears,
mf
sempre
legato
pp
pp
Ped.

that have won a more instantaneous success than Teresa del Riego's "O, dry those tears"; in fact it may be said to have created a record in the song-publishing world by selling to the tune of sixty thousand copies in the first six weeks after publication. It has been translated into three different languages—Italian, German, and Russian—and has been more parodied, perhaps, than any song of recent years, appearing on picture post cards, and even being reproduced in art pottery forms. The composer has received letters from admirers of the song in all parts of the world—a more pleasing compliment than the one paid by the music pirates, who made a ferocious onslaught upon it just as it was at the zenith of its popularity.

The first song of this composer's to be published (but not her first composition, as she wrote an Ave Maria in her teens) was "Speak on, sweet voices." After being for five years at the Convent of La Ste Union des Sacrés Cœurs at Highgate, she devoted herself to the study of composition and singing, and also took up the violin, but dropped the latter in order to give more time to composition. It was when living on the river near Henley that she wrote the song "Red Clover," which is always associated in her mind with a lovely old apple tree near Hambledon Lock, where boughs covered with masses of

blossom swayed almost to the water's edge. It is there that one can picture the "robin atilt in the apple-tree." Another song, "The Bell," was written at Mentone, when she was lying ill in bed at sunset, and listening to the sound of a church-bell tolling.

Teresa del Riego's most successful songs, besides those already mentioned, are "Happy Song," "My Gentle Child," "Slave Song," "A Land of Roses," and "To Phyllida" ("The Ladies of St. James"). Her most serious work published as yet is the song-cycle *Gloria*, words by the Hon. Stephen Coleridge, and the series of songs known as *Music Pictures*. But, as in the case of other composers, many that are most dear to her own heart have never yet appeared in print.

The first of Guy d'Hardelot's songs to see the light was "Sans Toi." She sang it at a soirée in Paris, and Victor Maurel, who was present, asked her what it was. She told him a little unpublished MS. He advised her to publish it at once. This circumstance had a great influence on Guy d'Hardelot's future life. For one thing, it made her decide to take up music professionally, and for another it brought her in touch with Calvé, with whom she went on a six months' tour in America, which had the effect of popularising her songs in that country, where "Sans Toi"

[*M. Shadwell Clerke.*

MADAME GUY D'HARDELOT.

[*Dover Street Studios.*

MISS TERESA DEL RIEGO.

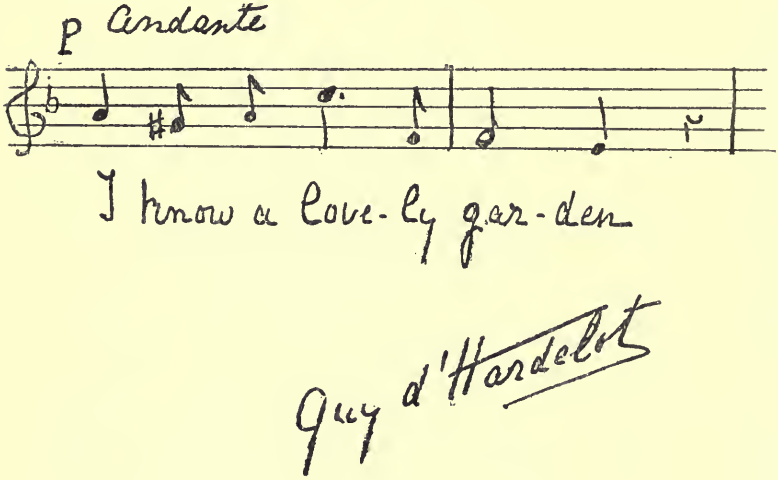
enjoyed an immense success, there being no less than six (pirated !) editions published there.

In this connection there is an amusing little story. While in America the composer had an interview with a musical publisher, and remonstrated with him for "stealing" her songs and publishing them without paying for them. Evidently the interview left an impression, for some time afterwards she received a beautiful bonbonnière, on which was inscribed "Souvenir d'un éditeur voleur américain !" Composer and publisher have since become firm friends.

The song was also very popular in France, but it never had much success in England. It was, in fact, a good many years before this composer's songs began to make their way in this country, with the exception of "Say Yes" and "Mignon." However, success came at last with "The Dawn"; to be followed by "Because," "I hid my love," "I know a lovely garden," "I think," and "In the Great Unknown," all immensely popular songs, particularly "Because." Of her lighter songs the "Lesson with the Fan" is a great favourite.

Guy d'Hardelot tells a funny story about the value of compliments which are sometimes paid by gushing people to composers of popular songs. A lady came up to her in a drawing-room recently, and after indulging in the usual gush, said, "You

know, I *do* love your songs so." "Oh," said the composer, rather at a loss as to what to say, "and which do you like the best of them?" Whereupon the lady promptly named two songs of Chaminade's!



Amy Woodforde-Finden may be said to have leapt into prominence among the women composers of the day by the publication of her *Four Indian Love Lyrics*. And yet to begin with the publishers refused them, and the composer, who believed in them strenuously, was compelled to publish them herself. For about a year they enjoyed a private circulation, and then they were brought to the notice of Hamilton Earle, who liked them immensely, and sang them

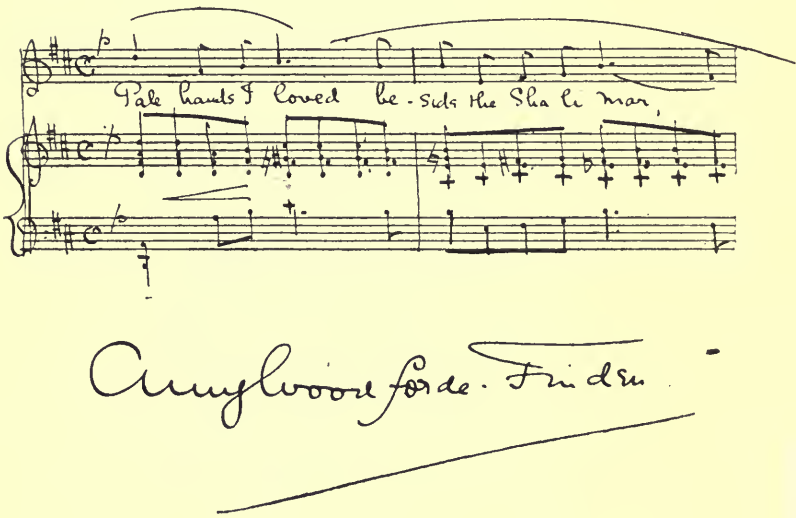
everywhere in the provinces. They met with so favourable a reception that the singer spoke to Mr. Arthur Boosey about them, with the result that the latter decided eventually to republish them, after having refused them at the outset. The songs at once became immensely popular, both in this country and America, and the composer received numberless letters of congratulation from all parts of the world.

The words, as is well known, are by Laurence Hope, who died a year or so ago. The composer wrote to the publishers of the poems asking for permission to use them, and shortly afterwards received a cable from Morocco, which ran: "Yes, with pleasure. No fee. Laurence Hope." Somehow she always imagined that the author was a man, and it was not till they met later in England that she discovered that not only was Laurence Hope not a man, but that she was the wife of General Nicholson, who had seen service in Afghanistan with the composer's own husband!

One of the most popular of these four lyrics is "Pale hands I loved." Of this there is rather a quaint story. A lady travelling abroad wrote to the composer recounting a conversation she had overheard between two girls in the hotel. "My dear," said one of them, "I've heard a lovely new song by Woodforde-Finden.

I can't remember the name, but it's something about 'pale feet,' and it's simply delicious!"

These Indian lyrics were not by any means the composer's first songs. She had already published several under her maiden name of Amy Ward. Two of these have since been republished and become famous. One, "A Sonnet," is now



known as "There has fallen a splendid tear," and the other is "O flower of all the world," words by Sir Gilbert Parker, which has since become one of the most popular of all this composer's separate songs.

Her first composition of all was a waltz, "The

[*Lallie Charles.*

MRS. AMY WOODFORDE-FINDEN.

[*Portman Studios.*

MISS DOROTHY FORSTER.

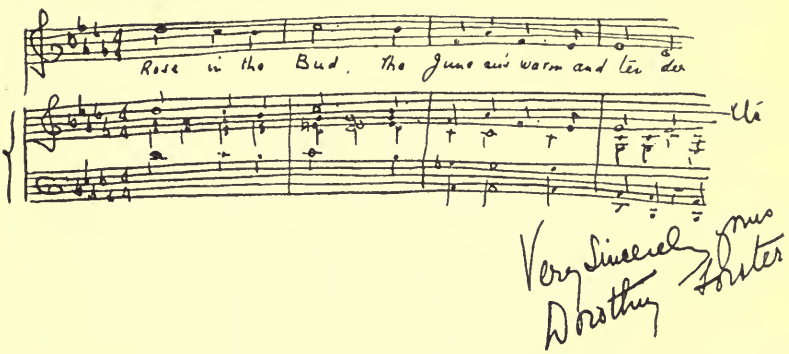
First Extra," written at the age of sixteen, and published by Robert Cocks.

Among more recent albums of songs which have followed the *Four Indian Love Lyrics* are *On Jhelum River*, *A Lover in Damascus*, *The Pagoda of Flowers*, *Aziza* (three Oriental songs), and a set of *Five Little Japanese Songs;* while of her separate songs the most recent is "White Sentinels," the words of which are by Major John Fraser, who is responsible for the lyrics of most of this composer's later Indian songs. The words of *A Lover in Damascus* were written by Charles Hanson Towne.

Many people are unaware that Dorothy Forster, the composer of "Rose in the Bud," first won success as a solo pianist. It was in this capacity that she toured for two years with George Grossmith, at the termination of which she gave up playing in public in order to devote more time to composition.

Actually her first published song was "When I think on the happy days," which was originally published by Cary and Co. and afterwards re-published at Chappell's. Mr. William Boosey, of the latter firm, induced her to seriously woo public favour with her songs, and selected her "Rose in the Bud" as the first venture. How happy a selection that was is now a matter of

common knowledge. The song achieved an instant success.



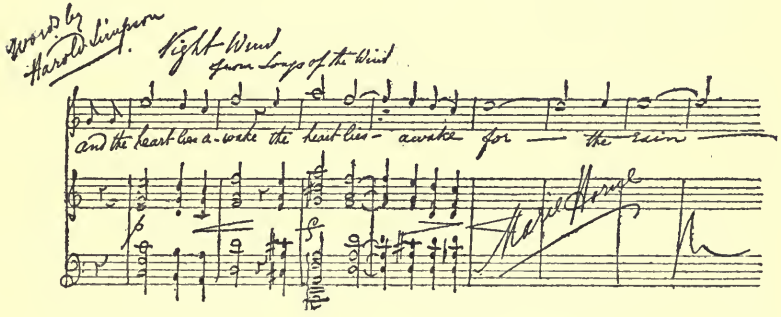
"Rose in the Bud" was followed by "Perhaps," "Dear Little Star," "Your Smile," "The Face of my Love" (the first of a series of *Songs at Sunset*), "Since Love has brought me nought but tears," "The dawn at your window," "Rosamond," and many others, which have all been immensely popular.

It is only in the last four or five years or so that Marie Horne has come to the front as a composer, as it was not until this comparatively recent period that she began to devote herself seriously to musical composition. But her songs very quickly made their mark, notably her song-cycle *Songs of the Wind*, which have achieved both an artistic and a popular success.

Of her other song-cycles may be mentioned

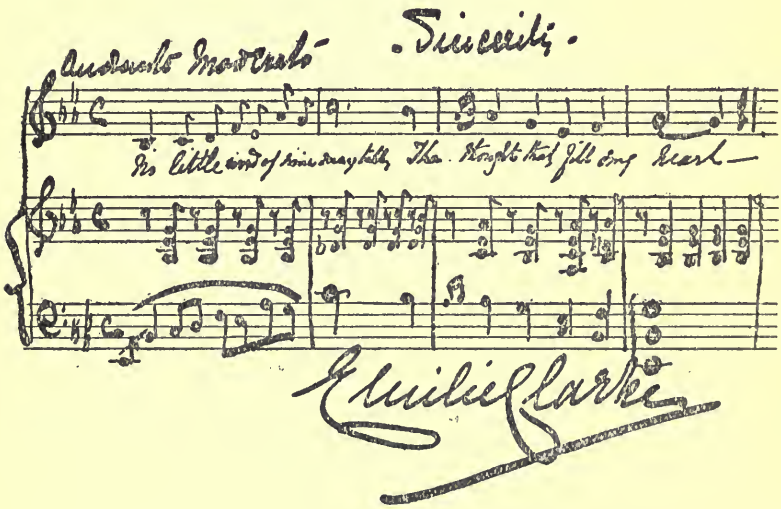
The Anvil, words by Weatherly, *Flowerland*, *The Ride* (a duet scena); and of the more light-hearted and frivolous order, *The Fables of Jane*. Two sacred songs, "Salve" and "In peaceful slumbering," may also be numbered among this composer's popular successes.

Marie Horne's music shows distinct traces here and there of the influence of her French descent, her father, Charles Desanges, having been the



composer of several operas which were performed at Milan. This inherent lightness of touch was very apparent in some additional numbers composed for *The Belle of Brittany* and *The Persian Princess*, one of her songs in the latter, "Moon Blossom," as sung by Ruth Vincent, being the most popular number in the piece.

Of Emilie Clarke's many successful songs none has exceeded "Sincerity," of which she wrote both words and music, in popularity. This is yet

another instance of a song which the publishers refused, and which made an independent success on its own account. Her friends liked the song so much that the composer decided to publish it herself, which she did under the title of "My Friend." Four years later, after a considerable number of copies had been sold, she received an offer for it from a publisher which she accepted. Then another publisher, who had refused it in the first instance, expressed a wish to have it, and succeeded in purchasing it, afterwards publishing it under its present title, since which it has enjoyed immense popularity.

Other songs of Emilie Clarke's which have achieved considerable success are "A Song of

[*Kent & Lacey.*

MADAME MARIE HORNE.

[*Lena Connell.*

MADAME EMILIE CLARK.

Greeting," "Lord, I believe," "Three Little Birds," "Heart's Delight," "I love you yet," and "Love's Message," (two little songs published together), and more recently, "Yesterday" and "Dearest and Best." This last is sung by Ethel Hook, who is, as is well known, a younger sister of Clara Butt.

Alicia Needham is another lady composer who is responsible for a number of successful songs, of which "Husheen," made popular by Clara Butt, is perhaps the best known. Other songs of this composer's are "My bonny curl," "The Barley Sheaves," "Who carries the gun?" and the Irish song-cycle *A Bunch of Shamrock.*

Mention should just be made of the songs of Chaminade, whose "Little Silver Ring" has already been referred to. There are many other names that claim an inclusion here, but it is not possible to do more than touch upon just a few of them, together with the songs by which they are, perhaps, best known.

Daisy McGeogh's "Two Eyes of Grey," Joan Trevalsa's "My Treasure," Kathleen Heron-Maxwell's "Smiles," Laura Lemon's "My ain folk," Alma Goetz's "Mélisande in the Wood" Olga Rudd's "Mine Enemy," Ellen Cowdell's "Maytime," Mrs. H. H. Beach's "The year's at the spring," Jeanne Malcolm's "My Rose," Constance Maud's "Down here the lilacs

fade," "Montague Ring's" "A Song of Spring," Dora Bright's *Seal Songs* (from *The Jungle Book*), and Adelina de Lara's song-cycles *Rose of the World* and *Songs of Two Lives* are among those which may be mentioned, but there are, of course, numberless others.

CHAPTER XVI

THE LIGHT HUMOUR BALLAD

NO book of this kind could be considered complete without some reference to a form of song which has sprung into existence of recent years, and which, for want of a better name, may be called the light humour ballad. There have, of course, been innumerable ballads, from the days of "Simon the Cellarer" to the present time, of a humorous tendency, and many of these have already been mentioned throughout this book; there is also the music-hall song; but the light humour ballad may be said to come somewhere between the two, and is to a great extent the outcome of the fashion of singing songs at the piano, first made popular by Corney Grain and George Grossmith.

The first name that suggests itself as a composer of this class of ballad is that of H. G. Pelissier, now so inseparably associated with "The Follies." It is owing to this latter circumstance that I have been induced to postpone his inclusion as a composer to this chapter, though, as a matter of fact, he has written a number of

successful songs that are not of a humorous order; and his greatest success has been won with one of these, "Awake," which has had an extraordinary popularity.

Other songs of his, of both kinds, which have been immensely successful are "Dreams of Rest," "Memory's Garden," "I want somebody to love me," "My Moon," "Mandy," "The Flower Girl," "Ypsilanti," "In my Garden of Roses," and "Echoes." It should be mentioned that the majority of the lyrics of his humorous songs are written by Arthur Davenport and Arthur Wimperis.

Another composer who, but for his untimely death, would have been in the front rank to-day of writers of this class of song, is the late Vere Smith, who founded the company known as "The Grotesques," for whose entertainment he originally supplied all the music, as in the case of Pelissier and "The Follies." His "Fairyland," "Little Crimson Rose," "Hello, Martha," and "Ma Dusky Maid" are all well known, in addition to a number of popular songs which are being sung by "The Grotesques" at the present time.

With the last two songs mentioned above the name of Margaret Cooper is closely associated. She is also responsible for having created most of the songs written by Charles Scott Gatty, of

which "Hullo, Tu-tu," "Bobby Dear," and "Janie" are familiar examples. Of other songs which are identified with Margaret Cooper's name may be mentioned "Sweep" (Lionel Monckton), "Visitors" (Waddington Cooke), "Master and Man" (Coningsby Clarke), "I want somebody to love me" (H. G. Pelissier), "I don't seem to want you when you're with me" (Paul Rubens), and "Philosophy" (David Emmell).

"Philosophy" has also been a great favourite of Maurice Farkoa's. This singer represents yet another branch of the light humour song, many of what are known as "Farkoa" songs being written in broken English with scraps of French inserted. The majority of these have been written by Weatherly specially for Farkoa, and among the number are "Nini, Ninette, Ninon!" and "Oh!" music by Lionel Monckton; "Mon Ami," music by Teresa del Riego; "I beg your pardon," music by Frank Tours; and "Do I like love?" music by Paul Rubens.

The last-named composer is best known in connection with his light operas, of which he often writes both lyrics and music, to say nothing of the book; but he is also the composer of a number of successful separate songs, sentimental as well as humorous, one of the most popular of the former variety being "When

the Stars were young," published some years ago.

Two other composers of the light humour song who should be mentioned are Frederic Norton and T. C. Sterndale Bennett (grandson of Sir William Sterndale Bennett), both of whom make a speciality of singing their own songs at the piano.

What other forms the popular ballad will take in years to come it is impossible to foretell. Fashions in songs, as in everything else, are continually changing, and there are at the present moment signs of a growing tendency to revert more and more to the old three-decker form of ballad, as against the short song, which has enjoyed so great a vogue during the last ten years.

But, whatever shape it may take, the popular ballad will always remain an integral part of the life of the people of this country ; and the number of years it has held its own in the affections of the public must be considered a sufficient answer to those who, in their zeal for "classical" music, are inclined to deny it any permanent place in the history of musical England.

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